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LETTERS OF CHARLES ELIOT NORTON

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME I

Charles Eliot Norton.

LETTERS OF CHARLES ELIOT NORTON

WITH BIOGRAPHICAL COMMENT

BY

HIS DAUGHTER SARA NORTON

AND

M. A. DEWOLFE HOWE

ILLUSTRATED

VOLUME I

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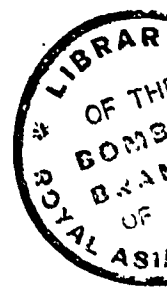

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PREFACE

Soon after Lowell's death Charles Eliot Norton wrote to Leslie Stephen: "I mean to publish, by and by, a selection of his letters, strung on a brief thread of Memoir"; — and later he added, "I do not propose to make a formal biography. I shall state such facts as are necessary for giving the outline of the course of his really uneventful life, — uneventful, I mean, in the external sense . . . and then I shall endeavour to illustrate his real life by his letters."

A similar purpose has controlled the editors of these volumes. Norton's correspondence, from the beginning to the end of his life, provides an abundant record of his thought and action. The problem has been to choose, from a supply exceeding the need, the passages which shall most accurately and significantly illustrate his life. The editors have attempted the rôle less of critics than of interpreters: much has been left to Mr. Norton himself — and to the reader.

Yet in a work of this nature — composed chiefly of letters — there must needs be great omissions. Individual habit in regard to the preservation of correspondence plays an important part. The inclusion of some names and the absence of others must throw the image slightly out of focus. But in one case the material exists, in another it does not: the circle of life as it appears in letters is like a wheel from which spokes are missing.

The absence of the letters to Lord Reay, — a correspondence covering more than forty years, — of those to Burne-Jones, Rudyard Kipling, and still other friends, is greatly to be regretted. To the friends who have lent letters warm thanks are due: this book owes much to their kindness and interest. Above all, the editors are deeply indebted to Mr. Arthur George Sedgwick and Mr. Eliot Norton for help and suggestion which have been invaluable.

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ERRATUM

Vol. I., page 62, lines 1 and 2, should read:—

Married respectively, Frederick Locker, and Arthur Penrhyn Stanley;

LETTERS OF
CHARLES ELIOT NORTON

VOLUME I

After a man's long work is over and the sound of his voice is still, those in whose regard he has held a high place find his image strangely simplified and summarized. The hand of death in passing over it, has smoothed the folds, made it more typical and general. The figure retained by memory is compressed and intensified; accidents have dropped away from it and shades have ceased to count; it stands, sharply, for a few estimated and cherished things, rather than, nebulously, for a swarm of possibilities.

HENRY JAMES.

LETTERS OF CHARLES ELIOT NORTON

CHAPTER I

HINGHAM AND CAMBRIDGE

(1678–1846)

THE inheritance of Charles Eliot Norton from his New England ancestors is singularly clear. Descended on his father's side from a race of preachers, — the recognized aristocracy of early Massachusetts, the leaders of their communities, — on his mother's side from the vigorous stock of the Eliots, he was born to a blended heritage of ideal and practical qualities. The special strain, the defined character of his inheritance was to shape his course from the beginning, and set its seal, stamped even through a marked individuality, upon his whole career.

Between 1633 and 1639, an old town record tells us, two hundred and six settlers had come out of Norfolk — that "hotbed of independency" — to Hingham in Massachusetts, named for the older Hingham; and tradition adds that "a band of these settlers led by the father and first minister of the town, the valiant Peter Hobart, gathered round their pastor under an old oak, to join with him in asking the blessing of the Lord on their new planting in the wilderness. Within a few

months they had a house built for public worship." The good Peter Hobart's ministry was long, and it was not till the 27th of November, 1678, that "he did with his aged hand ordain a successor."

It was John Norton — the ancestor of Charles Eliot Norton — whom Peter Hobart ordained. From the life which this ancestor embodied, his descendant derived so much that a passage from an address delivered by Charles Eliot Norton in 1881, at the celebration of the two hundredth anniversary of the Old Meeting-House at Hingham, must take its place here, as it reveals the seventeenth and nineteenth century Nortons in their natural relation.

"That successor [to Peter Hobart] was Mr. John Norton, a young man twenty-seven years old, who had received as good a training as New England could then bestow. He had been bred under the shadow of the church. Named for his more noted uncle, one of the four famous Johns[1] who were the lights of the early Church of Boston, he had derived from him a taste for learning, and the consecration to the ministry. He graduated at Harvard College in 1671, in the last class sent forth by the pious and learned President Chauncy; and Sewall, afterward Chief Justice, was one of his classmates.[2] It was a distinction then to graduate at

[1] Cotton Mather's four "Johannes in Eremo": John Cotton, John Norton, John Wilson, and John Davenport.

[2] "From an entry in Sewall's Diary, published by the Massachusetts Historical Society, — a book from which more is to be learned than from any other of the life of Boston and its neighborhood during the last quarter of the seventeenth century and the first quarter of the eighteenth, — it would appear that Mr. Norton had grave doubts as to coming into the Church. 'Satterday, Mar. 3, 1676/7 went to Mr. Norton to discourse with

Harvard. It meant being one of the clerical or magisterial order. It meant the possession of preëminent advantages. But the relation of the clergy to the community had already become very different from what it had been in the earlier days of the Colony. The contrast between the prominent position in public affairs, the wide and strong influence, the admitted authority of the uncle, and the tranquil, retired life, and the narrow limits of influence of the nephew, was not altogether the result of diversity of opportunities and gifts. . . .

"The year 1678 was an important one in the life of the young scholar. In that year he was married, in that year he was settled over this parish, and in that year he published a poem. It was a 'Funeral Elogy, Upon that Patron of Virtue, the truly pious, peerless & matchless Gentlewoman, Mrs. Anne Bradstreet.' I find in my ancestor's performance very slight merit, though it gives indication of formal training in the stiff poetic fashion of the day; but the enthusiastic historian of American Literature, Professor Tyler, who has an eye for swans, discovers in it 'force' and 'beauty,' calls it 'a sorrowful and stately chant,' and even ascribes 'poetic genius' to its author. Its real interest is in the proof that he possessed a fair measure of such culture

him about coming into the Church. He told me that he waited to see whether his faith were of the operation of God's spirit, and yet often said that he had very good hope of his good Estate. . . . He said, was unsettled, had thoughts of going out of the country. . . . And at last, that he was for that way which was purely Independent. I urged what that was. He said that all of the Church were a royal Priesthood, all of them Prophets and taught of God's Spirit, and that a few words from the heart were worth a great deal: intimating the Benefit of Brethrens Prophesying; for this he cited Mr. Dell. I could not get any more.'" (Norton's footnote.)

as was possible in New England at the time, and that he brought to Hingham the refined tastes, the scholarly disposition, and the literary sympathies which would confirm the regard of his people to him, and could hardly fail to quicken their own intellectual life.[1] . . .

"The native-born New Englanders were less instructed than the patriarchs, men of liberal education and wise counsel, who had come from the Old World. They were farther from the sources of enlarged understanding and liberal culture. They were no longer borne onward by the deeper currents of the life of the world. They had become provincial. Their minds had narrowed to their fortunes; their intellectual interests were scanty. Books were few; in many households the Bible was the only one. Even the Minister's library was but poorly supplied, and its shelves were for the most part loaded with treatises on controversial theology.

[1] Of Mrs. Anne Bradstreet, Norton wrote at another time: "It struck me that there would be something of quaint appropriateness in my writing, at this long interval, in regard to her whose praises he [John Norton] had sung, and that the act would not be without a certain piety toward my ancestor. And, further, I reflected, that as I could trace my descent in one line directly from Governor Thomas Dudley, the father of Mrs. Bradstreet, and as portraits of her brother Governor Joseph Dudley, and his wife, looked down on me every day while I sat at breakfast and dinner, she, as my Aunt many times removed, might not unjustly have a claim upon me for such token of respect to her memory as had been asked of me. . . . She cherished in herself and in her children the things of the mind and of the spirit; and if such memory as her verses have secured for her depend rather on the circumstance of a woman's writing them at the time when she did, and in the place where she lived, than upon their poetic worth, it is a memory honourable to her, and it happily preserves the name of a good woman, among whose descendants has been more than one poet whose verses reflect lustre on her own. (Through one of her children she is the ancestress of Richard Henry Dana; through another, of Oliver Wendell Holmes.)" See *Poems of Mrs. Anne Bradstreet, with an introduction by Charles Eliot Norton;* The Duodecimos, 1897.

The resources of English literature were unknown. Some of the chief glories of literature were prohibited. Shakespeare was a playwright, the minister of corruption. For a century after the settlement of New England I find no evidence that there was a copy of Shakespeare in the colonies. Pioneers and farmers have little leisure, and less inclination to read. There were no newspapers. There were no means, by regular communications from distant places, of diverting or enlarging the thoughts. The horizon of ideas was as limited as the horizon of the landscape.

"But the intelligence — stunted, starved as it might be — sought and found nourishment for itself, not altogether healthy, in one important source. Religion became the absorbing and permanent intellectual concern. It partook of the dryness of the intellectual life outside of it, but it served to keep alive the minds of men. The system of theology then generally accepted was one of the most complex and elaborate bodies of doctrine that has ever been devised by the ingenuity of subtle and vigorous thinkers in the attempt to frame a creed that should account for the existence of the universe, the nature of the Creator, and the destiny of man. Based upon the assumption of the absolute authority of the Scriptures, of the Old not less than the New Testament, as the Word of God, and their complete sufficiency as a theory of the universe and a guide to conduct, the creed attempted to embody the doctrines essential to salvation in a series of mutually dependent logical propositions. In its practical application to life it was probably the most artificial and the

most oppressive creed that has ever exerted a lasting influence upon a civilized Christian community. The fallen nature of man through sin, the enmity of God toward the human beings he had created, the responsibility of man and his helplessness to free himself from the curse denounced upon him, the damnation of infants, the eternal duration of the torments of hell to which the vast majority of mankind were doomed, weighed with unrelieved gloom upon the soul. There was nothing to break the force of the tyranny exercised in the name of religion over the spirits of the men and women and children in these regions. There was no delivery from it. The strong were subdued, the weak were crushed by it. In his Diary, under date of January 13, 1695/6, Judge Sewall makes this entry concerning his little daughter Betty, a girl of fourteen: —

"'When I came in, past 7. at night, my wife met me in the Entry and told me Betty had surprised them. I was surprised with the abruptness of the Relation. It seems Betty Sewall had given some signs of dejection and sorrow; but a little after diñer she burst out into an amazing cry, which caus'd all the family to cry too; Her Mother ask'd the reason; she gave none; at last said she was afraid she should goe to Hell, her Sins were not pardon'd. She was first wounded by my reading a Sermon of Mr. Norton's, about the 5th of Jan. Text Jn° 7. 34, Ye shall seek me and shall not find me. And those words in the Sermon, Jn° 8. 21. Ye shall seek me and shall die in your sins, ran in her mind and terrified her greatly. And staying at home Jan. 12, she read out of Mr. Cotton Mather — Why Hath Satan

filled thy heart, which increas'd her fear. Her Mother ask'd her whether she pray'd. She answer'd, Yes; but feared her prayers were not heard because her Sins not pardon'd. Mr. Willard [the minister] though sent for timelyer . . . came not till after I came home. He discoursed with Betty who could not give a distinct account, but was confused as his phrase was, and as had experienced in himself. Mr. Willard pray'd excellently. The Lord bring light and Comfort out of this dark and dreadful Cloud, and Grant that Christ's being formed in my dear child, may be the issue of these painfull pangs.'

"Such a domestic picture, impressive as it is, is but a feeble illustration of deeper unrecorded agonies.

"The gentlest preacher must deliver from the pulpit the harsh teaching of his creed. Mr. Norton is reported to have been of a mild spirit, and to have possessed an amiable disposition, but there is no reason to suppose that he failed in orthodoxy or softened the stern features of Calvinistic doctrine." [1]

Beyond the facts thus brought together, little is known concerning the young scholar who grew old in his calling, and whose pastorate in Hingham was nearly

[1] "Only one of his sermons during his long pastorate of thirty-seven years was printed. It was an Election Sermon delivered on May 26, 1708. 'Such an occasion,' says Hawthorne, 'formed an honorable epoch in the life of a New England clergyman.' Sewall's entry in his *Diary* concerning the sermon is amusing and instructive: 'Midweek, May 26, 1708. Mr. Jno. Norton preaches a Flattering Sermon as to the Governour.' 'May 27. I was with a Comittee in the morn, . . . and so by God's good providence absent when Mr. Corwin and Cushing were order'd to Thank Mr. Norton for his sermon and desire a Copy.' The sermon, printed under the title of *An Essay tending to promote Education*, contains some praise of Governor Dudley which was naturally distasteful to the Judge, who stood in manful opposition to Dudley's policy; but it is in other respects a creditable dis-

as long as Peter Hobart's. Sewall's record "that he was for that way which was purely Independent" implies, in its relation to the qualities to be transmitted to his descendants, something more than a passing theological distinction.

John Norton's descendants[1] continued to live in the little town of Hingham; and there, on December 31, 1786, Andrews Norton was born. His boyhood and youth were unmarked by incident worth recording; life in those days in a village like Hingham led to quiet ways and studious habits in one inclined to them; and in 1800, while still but a boy, he entered Harvard College, where four years later he graduated. As the years passed on, the grave youth with intellectual tastes gave himself more and more to the pursuits of the scholar. In 1811, he became a Tutor in the College; from 1813 to 1819, he held the Dexter Lectureship on Biblical Criticism; from 1819 to 1830, the Dexter Professorship of Sacred Literature. From 1813 to 1821, he served also as Librarian to the College. In 1821, on the 21st of May, he was happily married to Catharine Eliot — not quite eighteen years old — the daughter of Samuel Eliot, of Boston.

course, mainly directed against the prevailing unbelief. 'Our degeneracy,' said the preacher, 'is too palpable to be denied, too gross to be excused.' 'The longer Judgment is delayed, the heavier it will be when it cometh. It shall come; it hath sometime Leaden feet, but Iron Hands.'

"Two years afterward, March 26, 1710, Judge Sewall 'went to Hingham to Meeting, heard Mr. Norton from Psal. 145. 18. Setting forth the Propitiousness of God. In the afternoon Lydia Cushing & Paul Lewis were baptised. Din'd with Major Thaxter, Sup'd with Mr. Norton, Mrs. Norton, & their sister Shepard.'" (Norton's footnote.)

[1] His daughter Elizabeth married John Quincy, from whom John Adams and John Quincy Adams were descended.

BIRTHPLACE OF ANDREWS NORTON, HINGHAM, MASS.

After a few months spent in Boston, Andrews Norton and his wife decided to settle themselves in the country; and in order to be near his work at Harvard, they bought the house and some fifty surrounding acres in Cambridge, known as "Shady Hill." The long avenue led to Kirkland Street, not far from the College Yard and the old central buildings of the University; the house, built ten or fifteen years before the Nortons acquired it, they altered and enlarged; and there, during the next thirteen years, their six children were born.

Peaceful and fortunate years they were, except for the death of two children in 1833 and 1834, — first, William, a promising boy of three, and the following year, a little girl but a few weeks old. The other four children — Louisa, born in 1823, Jane, in 1824, Charles Eliot, in 1827 (November 16), and Grace, in 1834 — grew up happy and confident in the devotion of both father and mother, amid easy circumstances, in the sheltered and simple atmosphere of the period.

There was but one important break in the routine of a teacher's life, when in 1828 Andrews Norton with his wife and his son Charles, not yet a year old, made a six months' journey to England and Scotland. Letters to his father, Samuel Norton, describe meetings with Mrs. Hemans, the publication of whose poems in America under his superintendence had led to a warm personal friendship; with Crabbe, Joanna Baillie, Southey, and Wordsworth, who gave him a letter of introduction to Sir Walter Scott. Linking the past with our own day, there is a pleasant tradition of the visit to Wordsworth,

that the poet took the little Charles Norton on his knee and tenderly gave him his blessing.

It was a time when American visitors to England were objects of curiosity. When Andrews Norton, his wife, and a cousin of hers were dining one day with the Bishop of St. Asaph (Bishop Luxmoore), they were told that the Bishop's old housekeeper had been informed — to quote from one of Andrews Norton's letters to his father — "that an American gentleman and two American ladies were expected, and that she was quite curious about us, and wanted to know whether we were white or not. As we were going downstairs, she opened a door to look at us, and the Bishop, who was waiting on Catharine, good-humoredly turned her half round, that the housekeeper, as he afterwards said, might have a fair view." In 1829 the Nortons returned to Cambridge, and Shady Hill.

The epoch was not one of change or intellectual groping; the general content, the incorruptible simplicities, the intelligent provincialism of the community were the expression and result of the still homogeneous character of America at that time, before the vast influx of immigrants from Ireland and continental Europe had wrought the vital alterations that have been made in the social fabric of the country and in the functions of Democracy itself. It was natural that under such conditions race qualities should be strongly developed, that the individual should be what his fathers had been. John Norton lived in his descendant Charles Norton growing up in Cambridge in the years 1830 to 1845. The strong moral purpose, the concern

with things of the spirit, the scholarly bent of mind, the grave devotion to a worthy aim in life were tendencies, as they had flowed on through intervening generations, unconsciously directing the boy's career; and, as the ideals still cherished by a large part of the New England he lived in, were held as examples before him.

In dwelling on the boy's accumulated inheritances, the personal characteristics of Andrews Norton must not be overlooked. Never an ordained minister, never formally identified with any denomination, yet preaching not infrequently in Unitarian pulpits, and helping to prepare many young men for the ministry, he exerted a strong influence upon the Unitarianism of his day. The introduction of German radicalism into American theology caused him genuine distress, and it was he who deplored Emerson's Divinity School address of 1838 as "The Latest Form of Infidelity." Emerson, as we now know from his Journal of 1838, detected the hand of Andrews Norton, "the old tyrant of the Cambridge Parnassus," in a paragraph levelled at him in the "Daily Advertiser" immediately after the delivery of this address, yet clearly recognized the integrity of the source from which the attack came: "One cannot compliment the power and culture of his community so much as to think it holds a hundred writers; but no, if there is information and tenacity of purpose, what Bacon calls longanimity, it must be instantly traced home to some one known hand." This Emersonian recognition may perhaps best be supplemented by what President Walker of Harvard once wrote of Andrews Norton: —

"I can remember, as if it were but yesterday, the almost unbounded deference with which we, who constituted his first class in the Divinity School at Cambridge, looked up to him in the lecture-room. This arose in part from his undoubted learning and our sense of his caution and single-mindedness in the pursuit of truth; in part, also, from the peculiar character of his intellect, and his manner of teaching.

"His mind was more remarkable for the clearness and distinctness with which he saw what was within the field of his vision than for the largeness of that field. Accordingly, in making up his opinions, he was not troubled, as many are, by side and cross lights, and hence no misgivings, no waverings, no sudden changes. Hence also, though many of his conclusions startled men by their novelty, they were always such as could be clearly stated. He had no taste for groping in the dark, certainly none for making a public exhibition of his gropings. His mind was eminently positive, and, in this sense, despotic. He came before his classes, not as one in the act of seeking the truth, but as one who had found it.

"Something was also due to another peculiarity in his mental constitution. Few men have ever lived who had less of ill-will or unkindness. Nevertheless, his nature was the opposite to genial, understanding that word to mean a readiness to take up and sympathize with, and in this way to enter into and comprehend, a great variety of characters and convictions. He never put himself to much trouble to comprehend the ignorance or the errors of other people. He saw things so

clearly himself, and stated them so clearly, that, if a pupil failed to be convinced, he soon gave him up; and it was the dread of this which did more perhaps than anything else to keep us in order. . . .

"His great work on the 'Genuineness of the Gospels' is one of the most important contributions which this country has made to theological literature. To him, also, with Mr. Buckminster, Professor Stuart, and a few others, we are indebted for that impulse given to Biblical study in New England, early in the present century, which has been of incalculable benefit to all denominations."

When Charles Norton was seven or eight years old, he was sent to the Cambridge Classical School — a day school kept by E. B. Whitman. The boy's single existing school report bears record that in 1838 he received 8, "the highest mark, and given only *for extraordinary merit*," in thirty-three of the forty-five markings. Among his schoolmates was his later college classmate and lifelong friend, George Martin Lane, distinguished in the years that followed as a Latin scholar, a brilliant and useful member of the teaching force at Harvard, a witty and genial companion.

There is a suggestion of mental alertness outside the schoolroom and a foreshadowing of the young Norton's future activities in four copies of "The Cousins' Magazine," edited in 1841 by William P. Eliot and Charles E. Norton. "It will be printed," said the Prospectus, "on the best paper, and done up in a stout wrapper. Its price will be two cents for every reading." "Printed" was a euphemism for the careful penman-

ship of Charles Norton, who copied into the little pamphlets the contributions, prose and verse, original and translated, of his sisters and of his Dwight, Ticknor, and Wigglesworth cousins. In the first number "A Subscriber" challenged any reader to find an English rhyme for "assafœtida"; and in the second the challenge was accepted, under the signature "Mr. Grimes. H. W. L.," as follows:—

"I once fretted a
Friend with assafœtida,
Which I regretted a
Great many times;
I send you this answer
To show you I can, Sir,
As well as any man, Sir,
Tag together rhymes."

As Longfellow's intimacy with the Norton family was already long established, this bit of fooling for the amusement of "The Cousins" may safely be placed beside his more familiar doggerel lines about the little girl who, when she was bad, was horrid.

In some "Reminiscences of Old Cambridge," [1] written near the end of his life, the Cambridge of Norton's schoolboy years is clearly characterized by him. Of those simple days, when on Sunday mornings President Quincy's carriage and his father's were the only private carriages standing by the entrance of the College Chapel, he says: —

"Old Cambridge was still a country village, distinguished from other similar villages mainly by the existence of the College, concerning which Dr. Paige

[1] See Records of Cambridge Historical Society, October, 1905.

says with dry humour: 'The College gives employment to several professors, mechanics, and boarding-house keepers'; and one may add that it separated Old Cambridge, in its social characteristics, from the other sections of the town further than its mere local distance from them would justify. . . .

"But even a greater change than that from country village to suburban town has taken place here in Old Cambridge in the last seventy years. The people have changed. In my boyhood days the population was practically all of New England origin, and in large proportion Cambridge-born, and inheritors of Old Cambridge traditions. The fruitful invasion of barbarians had not begun. The foreign-born people could be counted upon the fingers. There was Rule, the ancient Scotch gardener, who was not without points of resemblance to Andrew Fairservice; there was Sweetman, the one Irish day-labourer, faithful and intelligent, trained as a boy in one of the 'hedge-schools' of his native Ireland, and ready to lean on his spade and put the troublesome schoolboy to a test on the Odes of Horace, or even on the *Arma virumque cano;* and at the heart of the village was the hair-cutter, Marcus Reamie, from some unknown foreign land, with his shop full, in a boy's eyes, of treasures, some of his own collecting, some of them brought from distant romantic parts of the world by his sailor son. There were doubtless other foreigners, but I do not recall them, except a few teachers of languages in the College."

The simplicity of the village life was matched by

that of the little college, which Norton entered in 1842. In his class of 1846, containing sixty-six members at graduation, Francis J. Child and George Martin Lane were among Norton's chief friends; another classmate was George Frisbie Hoar. With Professor Child the lifelong intimacy of neighbours followed these college days. Josiah Quincy held the presidency, except for the year of 1846, when, after the brief *ad interim* term of James Walker, Edward Everett took his place. In the faculty were Longfellow, Sparks, E. T. Channing, Felton, Walker, Benjamin Peirce, and Asa Gray — men with much to give to the receptive intelligence. The college system and discipline were such that opportunities were wasted even more freely than in later years; but then, as now, the ways to learning and cultivation were open to the eager-minded; and among these the inheritances and surroundings of the young Norton easily placed him. During his freshman year he lived at home, but afterwards in Holworthy Hall with his cousin, Charles Eliot Guild.

In the midst of his first year at college, Norton developed a somewhat serious affection of the eyes, and was sent to New York for examination and treatment by an oculist of repute. The sending of a boy of fifteen, who had lived at home, to a place so distant as New York then was from Cambridge, to care for himself alone in lodgings, was a serious matter for all concerned. The following extracts from letters written by his parents at the time throw light upon both their character and his — and especially upon the atmosphere in which he grew up: —

From Andrews Norton

CAMBRIDGE, 27th January, 1843.

MY DEAR SON, — I received your letter this afternoon. It has made us all a little sober. But I hope the course which it seems right that you should adopt will not be the occasion of much discomfort to you, and that you will find much that is agreeable during your residence in New York.

It will be a new experience of life to you; — somewhat of an early trial of your principles, your feelings and your capacity of taking care of yourself and recommending yourself. I have strong trust that it will be on the whole beneficial to your character. So far as it is a trial you must regard it as an appointment of God, and endeavour to improve it as such. You will always have my best wishes and my prayers — the best wishes and prayers of us all.

You will see from the last paragraph, that I think it best that you should be under Dr. Elliott's care. . . . I do not know whether you will wish to return home before fixing yourself in New York or not. About this I wish you to consult altogether your own feelings and judgment. If you do not return, you will write for anything which you would have sent on to you. — At all events we should want to see you, and you, I doubt not, would want to make a visit home, by the end of a fortnight or three weeks. . . .

You must make yourself occupations, walk about the city, see sights, and try to recommend yourself to agreeable acquaintance. We shall endeavour to do

something more to procure such acquaintance for you. You will of course come and see us repeatedly during the three months. We shall write you often; and who knows but some of us may visit you.

I shall attend to all that is necessary respecting your College affairs. Write to me of anything you want done, if we do not see you very soon. . . .

You may be sure that your mother and sisters remember you with constant love. May God bless you, my dear son.

Ever your affectionate father,

ANDREWS NORTON.

MY VERY DEAR CHARLIE,— There seems but little for me to add to this very kind letter of your Father's. You know that you have my true affection and sympathy. I had no thought when we parted that you would have such a trial to go through before we met again. But I trust and believe, my dear child, that you will bear it well, and then there can be no doubt that, as you say, it will be all for the best. We are very desirous of hearing from you again. Do not hurt yourself by writing, but write whenever you can safely. We shall be very desirous of doing all that is possible to make the time of your absence from home as pleasant as it can be. . . .

Good night, my dear boy.

Ever most affectionately, your

MOTHER.

From Andrews Norton

CAMBRIDGE, 15 February, Wednesday morn, 1843.

MY DEAR SON, — We are always very glad to get your letters, and yesterday had the pleasure of receiving two, one for myself and a note for your Mother, with the bundle of books, which were all quite satisfactory.

. . . Though you can read but little in New York, yet the time need not be lost even as regards *intellectual* improvement. It is important for one fond of reading to understand and feel that information is to be gathered from many other sources besides books. I think you have very good capacity for observing what you see and hear, that you keep your eyes open, and your attention awake; and you have now a good opportunity for exercising your faculties in this way. See, as far as you are able, whatever is of any interest in the city or its neighbourhood, find out all that you can about the state of things there, and write to us about it, as you have done. Have you been in the Police court or courts? —

Above all consider the events of life as intended by God for our discipline, for the formation of our characters. In life much is to be suffered as well as much to be enjoyed; but sufferings may be alleviated and made blessings by the qualities of character which they call into exercise. . . .

Perhaps your mother will add a line or two; so I break off. Think always, especially should you feel out of spirits, of the warm, unchanging affection and

constant interest with which you are remembered at home.

Ever, my dear boy, your affectionate father,

ANDREWS NORTON.

Here is another end of a letter for me to fill up, my dear Charlie, but what in the world can I have to write about? Three letters having been sent to you yesterday from us and two prepared to go to-day; really it requires great exercise of the faculties. We have to be very voluminous and under such circumstances too; shut out from all the world, buried in snow and seeing no mortals but each other for thirty-six hours, and then only Mr. Giraud. During the last week we have been twice snowed up, once drenched with rain; then frozen with cold and pelted with hail. . . . Is there nothing besides your books that you want from home? Whenever your cousin Samuel returns to New York I could send you anything, you know. Have you got yourself a new waistcoat since you have been gone? I hope you have, and I hope you keep yourself very neat in all respects. A gentleman so much at leisure as you are now ought to do that, particularly as it will gratify his ever loving MOTHER.

During this visit to New York, the boy, already familiar with some of Longfellow's friends, saw, not infrequently, Charles Sumner, who was in New York as "best man" for the wedding of Dr. Samuel G. Howe and Miss Julia Ward. Young Norton was a guest at the wedding, from which he carried away lively memories long retained. One day Sumner took him to call

upon Chancellor Kent, who strongly impressed the youth, in spite of his surprise "to hear a person so distinguished . . . use such an expression as 'them air things,' and others of the same sort."

With his eyes restored and with a valuable widening of horizons, the boy returned to Cambridge in time to finish the freshman year with his class, but unhappily too late to receive the "Detur" he had hoped to win. To the end of his days he liked to recall an incident which showed President Quincy's sympathetic kindness. It is recorded as follows in Norton's "Reminiscences of Old Cambridge." Of the loss of the Detur, — "that is, one of the books given out in the autumn to such students as have done well during their first year," he wrote: "It was a disappointment, for the Detur, in its handsome binding, bearing the College seal, is a coveted prize. On the morning after the Deturs had been given out, the freshman who served the President as his messenger came to my room with word that the President wished to see me at his office. Even to the most exemplary of students, such a summons is not altogether welcome, for 'use every one after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping?' I went accordingly, with some trembling, knocked, entered, and was received with the President's usual slightly gruff salutation, 'Well, Sir, what's your name?' Then, as he looked up and saw who it was, 'Ah, yes, Norton. Well, I sent for you, Norton, because I was sorry that under the rules I could not present you yesterday with a Detur. It was not your fault, and so, as a token of my personal approbation, I have got a book for you which may perhaps take the place of the Detur'; and he

handed me a prettily bound copy of Campbell's 'Poems' in which he had written his name and my own with a few pleasant words of approval. I have received many gifts in my long life, but hardly one which aroused a stronger sense of personal gratitude to the giver, or which has afforded me more pleasure."

Already the young student was showing an attribute developed in his later life to a marked degree — the capacity for friendship. Nor was this confined to his contemporaries. Letters from Longfellow, — a constant visitor at Shady Hill, with pockets often holding gifts for the younger members of the household, — from President Quincy, and from other friends of his parents, contain not simply the pleasant expressions of inherited friendship, but bear evidence of a relation between the young man and elder men which was even less usual then than it would be to-day.

Of this portion of Norton's early life no account would be complete without some mention of the social intercourse that animated those years at Shady Hill. With parents who kept their house hospitably open to relatives and friends, with two attractive older sisters just launched in Boston society, with a large family connection, and many cousins — Ticknors, Guilds, Eliots, and others — all vivaciously inclined toward the friendly gaieties of their circle and period, — gaieties that led from Cambridge to Boston, Brookline, Jamaica Plain, and beyond, — the boy's life had a delightful background. Among the friends who were constantly at Shady Hill while Norton was in college, and afterward, special mention must be made of Mrs.

Cleveland, the stepdaughter of Bishop Doane, of New Jersey. The Nortons had come to know her about 1837, and through life she remained the closest and dearest of friends, loved for qualities of heart and mind as liberal as they were delightful and rare in their combination. Left a widow while still young, she made annual visits, sometimes of several months, with her only daughter, at Shady Hill, where her four brothers, William, the Bishop of Albany, whose death has occurred almost as these words are written, George, the late Monsignore Doane, Charles and Edward, — each possessing unusual qualities and gifts which endeared them to their friends, — were also familiars. It was, however, not in that circle more than in others that Sarah Cleveland was the beloved friend. To Charles Norton, and in time to his children, she stood through many years in a rare relationship of affectionate sympathy.

But for one characteristic of the young student which clung to him through life, the pleasant domestic distractions suggested by what has been said would have wrought havoc with his college work and the other serious concerns to which he was already devoting himself. This characteristic, an unflagging spirit of industry, played its part in his making the college record implied in membership in Phi Beta Kappa, and, perhaps as much as any other trait of his nature, ensured the fruitfulness of all the succeeding periods of his life.

Yet when he graduated in 1846, the important work at Harvard, upon which he was to enter nearly thirty years later, lay unrevealed to him in either youthful inclination or intention.

CHAPTER II

INDIA AND EUROPE

(1846–1851)

At the time of Norton's graduation at Harvard, the foreign commerce of Boston was still a dominant element in the life of the community. For a young man who did not immediately prepare himself for one of the recognized professions, nothing was more natural than to enter upon a mercantile career — and this is what Norton did. He entered the counting-house of the East India merchants, Bullard and Lee, and by methodical work gained a knowledge of practical affairs which stood him in good stead throughout his life.

His interests in these early days, however, were not restricted to mercantile affairs. In a brief autobiographical paper dictated in the last year of his life, some matters of broader concern which soon enlisted his service are touched upon. "I think it was between '46 and '49, while I was still in the counting-house," he said, "that I got permission from the city government of Cambridge to use the schoolhouse, then standing on Garden Street, for a night school for men and boys. It was the first night school opened in Cambridge, and, so far as I know, the first of the kind in Massachusetts. I had many excellent volunteer assistants, among them John Holmes (the brother of the poet), Child, and Sidney Coolidge, a fellow of

heroic quality (devoted to the memory of Napoleon) and who years after, at the beginning of the Civil War, obtained a commission from the United States and shortly after died in battle, as he would have wished. He was the noblest character of the old-fashioned heroic type that I have ever known. At this time he was working in the Observatory as an assistant. I think we kept the school two evenings in the week and maintained it for two winters at least. If I remember correctly, there was an average attendance of about twenty men and boys. One of the boys was a charming little Irish fellow, bright, intelligent, sympathetic, by the name of Pat McCarty. He was a tender of cows, who picked up a precarious livelihood on the edges of the highway along the open fields that then bordered a considerable part of what is now Kirkland Street towards the Somerville line. Pat made the best use of his opportunities and in the course of time got into the Law School. I then lost sight of him for perhaps forty years, when he was recalled to my memory by a newspaper letter from Providence on the occasion of his election as a mayor of that city; in this letter it was stated that he attributed his start in life to our old evening school.

"During my years in the counting-house a casual acquaintance with Frank Parkman developed into a friendship which lasted through life. He was then printing in the 'Knickerbocker Magazine,' if I remember rightly, his first book, 'The Oregon Trail,' and when it was to be published as a volume he asked me to revise the numbers, and many an evening, when

there was not other work to be done, was spent by me and him in the solitary counting-room in going over his work."

These biographical notes record also a friendship with George Livermore, collector of rare English Bibles and other books, a patriotic citizen of Cambridge, with whom Norton served, as treasurer, on the committee of the Boston Athenæum, which between 1848 and 1855 raised the funds for the purchase of Washington's library by that institution.

In spite of these and other useful activities beyond the daily routine, the confinement of office work by no means satisfied the young man's ambition, and a welcome opportunity to break away from it, and vastly to broaden his knowledge of the world, came to him when his firm offered him the post of supercargo on their ship, Milton, sailing for India, May 21, 1849. For the young man whose interests were chiefly of a serious character, and whose tastes led him to association with older persons, the long voyage to India, — with its enormous opportunity for reading, — the experiences there, and subsequently in Europe, were full of revelation. They strengthened tastes already marked; opened doors upon interests he was fitted to appreciate; and showed him in its fulness what Europe might offer to the intelligent spirit. "Up to my leaving home for India in 1849," he says in the notes already quoted from, "I had led a narrow life, in a sense, of domestic seclusion in Cambridge, — pleasant, good for a foundation, — but the circumstances were fortunate which finally took me out of it and enlarged my vision of the world."

Norton's letters to family and friends during this experience of foreign travel afford an extraordinarily complete chronicle of events; they are no less remarkable for their evidences of the strong family feeling which bound together the circle at Shady Hill. Their length and their detailed and often admirable description of scenes and experiences must have made these letters most welcome at home. For biographical purposes, however, it is enough to select a few of the more personal passages, illustrating in greater and lesser measure the equipment for later years which the young traveller drew from India and Europe; and at the same time to recall the fact that the writer of the letters was not quite twenty-two when he left home, and was but twenty-three when he returned.

A letter — highly characteristic in its expression — written by his father on the very eve of his sailing, makes vivid the devoted relation between the older and the younger Norton.

From Andrews Norton

Sunday, 20 May, 1849.

You will sail to-morrow, my dear son, and we shall be separated for a long time. God only knows when we shall meet again. But we are in his hands, and we shall meet again.

I feel how blessed we both are, that you are entering now on this new era in your life under circumstances so peculiarly favourable; — that you not only have the entire affection of us all at home; but that you leave behind you so many other friends with kind feelings

towards you and a sincere interest in your welfare. You leave behind you also an unsullied reputation, and the belief among all who know you that you have more than common powers of serving others.

These are not things to make one vain. On the contrary their true tendency is to produce that deep sense of responsibility, — of what we owe to God, to our friends, and to our fellow men, — which is wholly inconsistent with presumption and vanity.

Growing old as I do, I rejoice that I can at any time commit to you with full confidence the care of your mother and sisters. The remembrance of her constant love, the true love of a mother, and of the ties of affection which have bound us all together as so happy a family will remain with you, I know, through life. They will, I trust, remain with you forever.

I part with you with strong feelings, but without regret, because I am satisfied, that should you live, your experiences for the next two years, may not only be a source of great pleasure to you, but a source of great improvement; that they may serve not merely to enlarge and improve your mind, but to strengthen your powers of active usefulness. If this be so, as we both believe, the course you have adopted is the course of duty; and under any circumstances it can never be a subject of reasonable regret to yourself or to us at home, that you have pursued it.

I could say much more. My mind has been full of thoughts and feelings, but this is not a time to say unnecessary words, or anything which might unnecessarily affect you. You have my love for you and the

love of us all. You have our wishes and hopes for you. Feel at all times your dependence on God, and pray to him, and when you pray remember us. And may his blessing, my dear son, be with you in this world and forever.

Ever most affectionately your father and friend,

ANDREWS NORTON.

The voyage from Boston to Madras, where the Milton came to port September 1, 1849, occupied one hundred and two days. There was ample leisure for watching birds and clouds, and studying the navigation of the ship. How much time beside there was for reading, and to what good use the opportunity was put, one may learn from a letter of Norton's to his father, so long that only the portion of it dealing with a single book can now be used. Here is the surprising list of the books, beside Gibbon, which he read and analyzed at length: Milman's "Life of Horace"; "Layard's admirable work" — evidently "Nineveh and its Remains"; Curzon's "Visit to the Monasteries of the Levant"; Bishop Heber's journal; James Mill's "History of India," with Wilson's continuation, and "Elphinstone, a great part of whose work," he says, "I have read twice"; the "Institutes of Manu," overpraised, he thought, by Sir William Jones; Colman's "Hindu Mythology"; Burke's "Speeches on the Impeachment of Warren Hastings"; Victor Jaquemont's "Correspondance avec ses amis pendant son voyage dans l'Inde"; Ward on the Hindus; Milburn's "Oriental Commerce"; Mill's "Political Economy"; Lane's

"Selections from the Kurān"; much of Shakespeare, and the whole of Milton's poetry. "I have studied a little Latin and less Greek. I should have studied more of each but that I found I was stooping over my writing and dictionaries too much."

Altogether this record of intelligent application must have brought pleasure to a father who was himself a scholar — a pleasure the greater for the words near the end of the letter, revealing the ingenuous pride and affectionate sympathy of the son: "But the books which I have read, my dear Father, with much the most interest and much the most pleasure have been your 'Statement of Reasons' [1] and your translations from the New Testament. I should use the same expressions had they been the work of one whom I did not know: you can judge how great my interest and pleasure have been in reading them as your work. . . . I feel at the same time a difficulty in writing of it to you so as not to overstep the bounds of respect and modesty."

The passage relating to Gibbon, and illustrating the tone of the entire letter, is as follows: —

In the Indian Ocean, Sunday, August 26, 1849.
So. Lat. 2 Lon. 80.

. . . For some weeks past much of my time has been employed in reading Gibbon. I have now read more than three-quarters of his work. I have found it exceedingly interesting, and filled with information which

[1] "A Statement of the Reasons for not believing the Doctrine of Trinitarians as concerning the Nature of God and the Person of Christ." Boston, 1833.

I desired to obtain. I have read it with continually increasing admiration of the learning and of the intellectual power which it displays, with continually decreasing respect for the character of its author. I cannot, of course, write to you as fully with regard to it as I should like; but there is one point which has particularly struck me. I am convinced that the power of Gibbon's attack on Christianity has been vastly overrated. This seems to me to have arisen from two causes. The first and most important of these is that Gibbon, directing his attack upon the religion for the most part through its abuses, and through the fictions which have been established in its name, brings the whole weight of his learning and sarcasm to bear against the doctrine of the Trinity. This has been mistaken by the adherents of that doctrine as an attack on the foundations of the religion; and as it is a doctrine which cannot be defended by revelation, by reason, or by history, the power of the attack on it has justly been considered by them as dangerous. The second cause depends upon the first. The defenders of the established churches of Europe finding no means to answer these chapters, the impression naturally spread and gained strength that they were unanswerable. Separating the attack on the abuses of the Church from all that is distinctly directed against the foundations of Christianity, they contain nothing which could shake the faith of the weakest believer. Nor in an argument against them would I shelter myself under Paley's comfortable and fallacious query, Who can refute a sneer? The sting of a sneer is blunted

and is turned back against its utterer when it is discharged against a truth which can be established. It is only when a cause is weak that a sneer is dangerous, and only then that it cannot be refuted or despised with safety. A volume of sneers against the character of Washington would only excite a pitiful contempt towards its author, then of how much less weight a sneer against any of the *essential truths* of Christianity! But I will not go on. Milman's notes which are contained in the edition I have been reading are almost as poor as his life of Horace. They show very considerable research and reading, but are often weak in argument and careless in diction. Half of them are of little value to the general reader, and the other half of not much more. . . .

A summary of the experiences of Indian and European travel might be drawn bit by bit from the traveller's many letters; but in writing from Italy on his way back from India he described to a friend his itinerary, which will serve in part as such a summary, to be supplemented by a few of the more picturesque passages from separate letters: —

To M. H. Force

VERONA, April 10, 1850.

MY DEAR MANNING, — . . . The voyage ended, and then came India, full of unimagined experiences and new pleasures. . . . We spent two months at Madras and Calcutta, and then travelled up the country to Benares, the most curious and strange of all the cities

in the world, the one which seems the farthest from all the ideas of modern civilization and progress. From here we went to Lucknow, an entertaining specimen of a Mahometan capital, completely unanglicized. Then up to the outskirts of the Himalayas, to see the long snowy range of the highest of all mountains, a scene hardly to be surpassed in its kind. Then we went down to Delhi, so full of historical interest, and crowded with fine memorials of the Mahometan empire in India. Then to Muttra and Bindrabund, two of the chief seats of Hindu superstition, — and then to Agra with its Taj, the most beautiful sepulchral monument in the world. I received here news of the illness of my father, and leaving Ritchie [1] hastened down to Bombay, where I found, to my great happiness, favourable news from home. As I wished to spend the summer where I could have frequent and rapid news from home, I left Bombay after seeing the caves of Elephanta, and came to Egypt to have a distant view of the Pyramids, to spend a little time in the Arabian Nights' city of Cairo, and in Mehemet Ali's city of Alexandria. Then came a very entertaining week at Smyrna; and then steaming through the islands of Greece and up the Adriatic, I reached Trieste. And after a day or two spent there and a fortnight in Venice, here I am in Verona writing to you.

Of the end to be gained by all this travel — the life that was to follow it — Norton gave two intimations

[1] Montgomery Ritchie, Norton's companion on the long voyage, and colleague in the commercial interests which took him to India.

in his letters. In writing to his family from the ship which bore him to India, he asked that arrangements be made for his securing a firman from the Sultan to facilitate travel through Turkish dominions, and said: "I should be described as having no commercial object, but simply as a man of letters travelling for information and pleasure." In writing, during his passage from Bombay to Aden, to his cousin Charles Guild, with whom he was planning to engage in business, he said: "What as merchants we are to look forward to is not so much the gaining of much money as the gaining of an honored and respected position in society. I do not deny that money will help us to get this and give us much power, and in this respect is to be desired, but it is a simple means, and not the only means to an end." It is evident that Norton's duties as supercargo left him freedom for an indefinite amount of sight-seeing, and that political and social matters and the acquiring of solid information seemed to occupy more of his attention than the things of art which in later years would have engaged him; but whether he is looked upon as a future merchant or as a man of letters in the making, it is clear that he improved, with youthful energy and eagerness, every opportunity for the enrichment of his mind.

The sights of Madras, and then of Calcutta, the meetings with Englishmen and their families, with whom agreeable acquaintances, formed at first through commercial connections, were naturally extended, afforded ample material for detailed and entertaining report. His thoughts, constantly turning towards

home, were sometimes unexpectedly borne thither. At a bachelors' dinner at Calcutta, for example, an official of the civil service asked him, "Are you the son of Andrews Norton?" "My answer" — a letter records the occurrence — "was a rather surprised 'yes,' and he said, 'I know him very well. I have several of his books upstairs. I first became acquainted with him in reading Blanco White's life, and then I sent for his books.' This was a pleasant incident, was it not?"

The following group of letters to friends and relatives shows an interest in the natives of India quite as keen as that in the Englishmen with whom Norton was thrown.

To Thomas Wigglesworth, Jr.

CALCUTTA, October 1, 1849.

MY DEAR COUSIN, — . . . We reached here just in the midst of the holidays, but on the last day of the festivities. It was the day on which the Hindus take their images of the goddess Durga, and parading them through the streets with the most horrid noise of drums, cymbals, and buffalo horns, carry them down to the bank of the river, and drown them: an interesting termination, certainly, to the chief religious ceremonies of a people. In the evening I drove through the principal streets of the city; they were crowded with foot passengers; procession after procession with its train of followers passed along. The light from the torches which they bore now struck on the bright-coloured images of the goddess and her attendants, which were ornamented with flowers and with glittering tinsel, and then, some-

times flickering so as to leave everything in darkness, it again lighted up the mass of dark Hindus with their loose white garments, and turbans, making them so different from an American crowd. I could not but contrast the scene with that which we see at home, on the fourth of July, or on other days of celebration. It was very late before the noise of the discordant music and the shrill cries of the natives died away; at last the idols were all put to bed in the river and the people had turned homeward, and when I went back to my room the streets had regained their usual nightly stillness. I have spoken to several of the most intelligent Hindus here with regard to these ceremonies, and they all treat them very lightly. They continue to join in them, however, but their presence is mere hypocrisy; they fear lest they should be suspected, and should lose their caste if they neglected to join in them, and they have not independence enough to break away and clear themselves from the superstition, the folly of which they confess. If they, that is the more intelligent Hindus, would but combine they might snap their fingers at the terrors of losing caste; they are numerous enough to support each other, and to form a sufficient society for each other, while their example would undoubtedly be followed by many of all classes. The vast majority, however, cling with obstinacy to their old faith, they are too uneducated, too miserable to have an idea of any other, and opposition to change is one of the most striking features of the Hindu character.

I hope to find the natives in the upper country a

better set than those at Madras, and the Bengalis, and from what I hear I judge that they must be so. They can hardly be worse. It is uncomfortable enough, if one takes no higher view of it, to be surrounded by persons whom you cannot trust in the slightest respect, who know no difference between truth and falsehood, or between honesty and dishonesty, who to your face are full of salaams and humility but who behind your back may be tricking you. Here at the hotel, where everyone is obliged to have his own servants, no servant is allowed to go out of the house, after meals, until all the silver has been counted. This is not, indeed, a very striking instance of the system of distrust that pervades everything here, but it will give an idea of it. I do not think the whole of their dishonesty is to be ascribed to the native character; a portion of it comes from their treatment by their English masters. The native tendency to deceit creates suspicion, and the suspicion exhibited in the treatment they receive reacts to increase the very cause that gave rise to it. There is no attempt, I mean of course in the general manners of the whites, to conciliate or to attach the Hindus. The servants are treated as caprice may dictate; slowness and mistakes are punished as if they were the worst faults. There is not the least attention paid to the feelings of the lower classes, very little to those of men who are superior in manners, at least, to those who slight and wound them. This is as it seems to me now. I may of course, when I have been longer in India, find reason to alter my judgments. . . .

To H. W. Longfellow

CALCUTTA, October 21, 1849.

The letter which you gave me before I left home to the Poet Laureate of Delhi has brought me so many entertaining experiences that I am tempted to write to you of them, and to thank you again for the introduction. I had been but a few days in Calcutta when one morning, taking the letter and the book which you had sent him, I drove to his house. It is in the native part of the town, in Sobha Bazar, or the "Beautiful Bazar" as it means in English, though according to our ideas there is little reason for the name. Stopping at the door I sent up my card and the letter. I waited for a long while, and occupied myself in studying the house which was a large two story building, with white plastered walls, in which were numerous dim and dusty windows, while on the balustrade above were perched several sleepy crows. A beggar was lying at the door, and two or three servants were lounging in and out. At length the durwan reappeared and I followed through a dark and dirty arched passage, into the interior court of the house, which was filled with weeds and rubbish. Passing through the court I was taken up stairs into a large and vacant room, and there asked to sit down. There were old-fashioned coloured French engravings on the walls; the scanty furniture, which had once been showy, was old and dirty, the carpet was ragged; on a pier table stood two or three little pieces of porcelain and blown glass, and the flies that were buzzing in the sun were meeting with an untimely death in the webs

of the spiders who seemed to have retained long and undisputed possession of the windows. It was like the rooms of many other of the native houses which I have seen, which remind me of the faded and tawdry scenes of a theatre. In a smaller room, the door of which stood open, was a scribe, sitting on the floor writing. The Rajah at last came in, not dressed in shawls and jewels as in his portrait, but in the common loose white dress of the Hindus. He received me very politely, and we sat down together. He expressed his pleasure at receiving your letter and your book, and at the announcement of his being elected a member of the American Oriental Society, which I had also brought him. He told me that he had not long before received a letter from the "late respected Polk," and that he had already sent copies of his works to the present President. When I rose to take leave he said that I should hear from him very soon. He is a man of about forty, well looking, and graceful in his manners; — he is not, however, one of the most elegant of the Hindus and his expression is sensual. The next morning I was sitting in my room when a native servant came in very showily dressed, with a red band over his shoulder on which was a silver plate engraved with the title of his master. He handed me a note in which was a card of invitation; "The Royal Poet of Delhi, Maha Rajah Apurva Krishna Bahadoor, requests the honour of Mr. Norton's company at a tea-table at his residence on Monday at 7 1-2 o'clock in the evening." I of course accepted the invitation and went on Monday evening. The only other guest was a native physician. On the

table of the room where we sat before tea were the beautiful manuscript copies of the works of the Poet. One of them was superbly illuminated. In several of the pictures angels were represented amusingly dressed after the English fashion of ladies' dresses of twenty years ago, with very short waists, and very full sleeves. On another table was lying a folio volume of the poems of the present Emperor of Delhi, printed and bound with regal magnificence; not far from it was a volume of Mr. Everett's orations, the gift of the author, and one or two gold medals that the Rajah had received on different occasions. When we went in to tea I found the table beautifully set out with silver and porcelain and flowers, and covered with Hindu delicacies alone. There was not a single eatable of foreign character upon it. The Hindu cookery is mostly very rich and sweet, and some of it is very pleasant, but it was impossible for me to do justice to the fifteen different articles which the hospitable attention of the Rajah urged upon me. During the entertainment two young sons of the poet, handsome, bright-eyed little fellows, as all Hindu children are, came in. They were very showily dressed, in red embroidered dresses hung over with gold or gilt ornaments. Our conversation ranged very widely. The Rajah was curious about America; he thought our public officers were paid very poorly, and could hardly understand our political constitution as I explained it to him. I got some information from him, however, with regard to Indian matters. It was nearly ten o'clock when I took leave. Since then I have received from him one of his works and a package

and letter for you which I shall send home by the Milton.

I am sorry to say that the Rajah, whose name, if translated into English would be, "The great King, Boundless Krishna the Valiant," is not much respected by the better and more intelligent Hindus. He does not write his own poetry, but employs Moonshees, who compose for him the works which he publishes under his own name. He likes notoriety, and is as fond of appendages to his name as your English friend who is so pertinacious in his search after societies who will admit him as a member. I regret the more that this should be so because there is a great want among the Hindus of men of abilities and taste for literature. Young Bengal, instead of cultivating its own literature, likes better to write poor verses and common-place essays in English. . . .

If I can ever be of service to you while I am away, you will, of course, let me know, for the sake of the pleasure which it will be to me.

With my affectionate remembrances to Mrs. Longfellow, I am ever

Affectionately and faithfully yours,
CHARLES ELIOT NORTON.

To Miss Anna Ticknor

CALCUTTA, October 21, 1849.

. . . I was invited the other day by one of the most agreeable and intelligent Hindus that I have met here, Rajender Dutt, to come to his house in the evening to see a native theatrical entertainment. I was of course

very glad to go, and just after dark drove to his house, which, like the majority of those of the rich Hindus, is ill-situated, large, and inelegant on the outside. Within, the rooms, which are generally very small, are built around an open square court; about the second story runs a verandah with which the upper chambers communicate. All looks uncared for and often dirty, as if there were an absence, as indeed there is, of refined taste and oversight. The durwan with a drawn sword in his hand met me at the door, and took me into the court where the play was already going on. I saw Rajender in the verandah above beckoning to me to come up, so pressing through the crowd of spectators I made my way upstairs. Chairs were arranged in the verandah, and the inmates of the house and their invited guests were seated there. The scene was one of the most curious and striking that I have ever seen. The actors and the musicians occupied one end of the court, the remainder of which was filled with an audience of little children and men packed very closely as they sat upon the bare ground, for the door was open to any passer-by who chose to come in and look on. Some of the farthest spectators were standing, and one could see the interest they took in the performance by their immobility and quietness. The only light came from four large torches held near the players, by torch-bearers whose fine figures were shown to great advantage. The flickering light sometimes burning very brightly illumined the whole court; it displayed the bright dresses and the animated gestures of the performers, it fell on the dark figures of the audience, and

went streaming out into the street as if hospitably eager to bring in more guests. There, down below, is a beautiful contrast, an old man with his white hair and beard, and his withered bronze-like face looks as if his life were wrapped up in the play, while by his side sits a bright-eyed little boy who is watching the jingling of the bells on the ankles of one of the players. The play, or rather the opera, for there is very little recitative, the dramatic performances of the Hindus having degenerated into operas, is founded on a beautiful little episode in one of their longest and most famous poems. The episode has been translated by Milman under the title of "Nala and Damyanti." I suppose that the opera the other night followed the story about as closely as the Italian operas follow the stories upon which they are founded. The music was more various and pleasing than I had supposed from the accounts of Hindu music that I had read. The drums and the stringed instruments were sometimes discordant, and sometimes, as happens in our orchestras, they were played so loud as to require an exertion of voice on the part of the singer, which destroyed any delicacy or sweetness of tone. The female parts are all played by boys, and one of them had an exceedingly fine voice, soft, full and sweet. The strongest voices, however, are soon overstrained and worn out, for the performances are mercilessly and to a stranger wearisomely long. This evening, for instance, the play was going on from seven till half-past twelve, and as during this month, which is the great season for festivals and entertainments among the Hindus, the troupe is engaged for

almost every evening, the labour and fatigue of the principal performers is excessive. During the remainder of the year they are, however, engaged only rarely. A great exercise of the memory is also required from the actors, for the music is learned entirely by ear, without written notes, and the words of the parts are committed in the same way, that is, without being learned from a printed text. The troupe which we saw, which is considered in every way one of the best in Calcutta, are able to perform five or six different pieces, and this is thought to be an unusually large variety. There was no attempt at scenery the other night, and I am told that shifting scenes are never used. The dresses were showy, and there was some conformity in them to the represented positions and characters. For instance one of the most curious scenes was that in which a marriage was represented with almost all the details of a regular wedding among the natives, the princess and her lover being dressed in the established bridal costume. The only mark of applause among the audience was the occasional throwing of some rupees tied in the corner of a handkerchief at the feet of the actors, and this was only done by the family or the guests in the verandah. It was only by their stillness and attention that the crowd below showed their approbation, except indeed during the acting of two men who played the parts of clowns, and on the appearance out of a small basket of a remarkable dwarf, when there was universal laughter and something approaching to a stamp of admiration. The Hindu, whose highest idea of happiness is inaction, can hardly understand that state of excitement which

finds vent in a Western audience in a whirlwind of applause. Although I did not stay to see the play out it was quite late when I left the house. The native quarter of the town through which I drove was still crowded with passengers, the provision and confectionery and betel-nut shops were still open, and the smoking lamps by which they were lighted brought into view the dark figures of the customers, and showed dimly the gloomy interior of the low houses. They served also to light the street, for it is a shame to Calcutta that the poor lamp posts with a faint apology for a light are scattered at such distant intervals through the streets as to remind one of angels' visits. . . .

To Miss Louisa Norton [1]

CALCUTTA, October 22, 1849.

. . . On Friday evening we were at Rajender's house to see a native theatrical entertainment of which I have written an account to Anna Ticknor in a letter which you will see. The Dutt family is a very remarkable one, they (at least some members of it) are far the most interesting and intellectual natives that I have seen. As I treat them — as I should be inexcusable if I did not, but as I am sorry to say but few do — as gentlemen and as equals, we are now warm friends, the more so as they see that I am interested in the Hindus and desirous to see all that I can of their characteristic customs and habits. I shall have a correspondence

[1] During Norton's absence from home at this time his sister Louisa became engaged to William S. Bullard, of the firm in whose employ Norton went to India.

with some of them after I leave Calcutta.[1] The family has lived together with their property in common and with no division for seven generations, the eldest member guiding the direction of affairs. There are now two hundred of them living together, from white-headed old men down to little children in arms, all happy and contented. Most of them are free from any prejudices of caste, and, scorning the native superstition, they have become deists, which is a result to be explained without difficulty. They still, however, preserve an outside respect for the rules of caste of the prevalent religion. I have already mentioned, in one of my last letters, the nautch which they are about to give at the close of the month. It is to last for three nights, the two first of which are public as it were, and many Americans and English will be present. The last evening is set apart for the receiving of Hindu guests, friends and persons of distinction alone. Rajender, however, has promised to smuggle me in. . . .

To Mrs. Andrews Norton

CALCUTTA, Wednesday, October 31, 1849.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,— . . . And now a little journal. Wednesday and Thursday were Hindu holidays. It was the festival of the goddess Juggud'hatri and was celebrated with some show, though not with so much as the Doorga poojah. Rajender asked me to come to his house on Thursday morning to see the sacrifice to the

[1] With Rajender Dutt, in whom Norton became much interested, he carried on a long correspondence. Rajender's letters illustrate strikingly the pains and difficulties for a youth of his race, whose intelligence had led him far from the superstitions he had been bred in.

Goddess. I was very glad to go. It was about ten when I reached the house and I sat for some time in the verandah talking with Rajender, Calidas, and Omeesh, and playing with the little naked black Cupids that were running about, and smoking a hookah, before the ceremonies of the sacrifice commenced. At last three goats were brought into the courtyard, three dishes, one containing a plantain, another some rice, and the third some other fruit were set on the ground. Then the head of the house, old Doorga Charn Dutt, came into the court, and, having bent on his knees with his head touching the ground, he made some silent prayer. Many of the household had gathered about meanwhile in the verandah, and down below, to witness the sacrifice. Doorga Charn having risen, a goat was brought forward, and its head being fastened was struck off at one blow by an attendant. Three or four musicians made a loud din with their tomtoms and cymbals, the blood of the goat was poured over the plates of offerings, and the head was carried into an inner room to be laid before the four-handed, yellow image of the goddess. The same forms were gone through with the other goats, and the sacrifice was ended. The goddess having been propitiated, her image was borne down, attended with music, to the bank of the stream, and cast into the sacred river. Is it not a strange thing that such ceremonies should be continued in a family some of whose members are intelligent men, acquainted with the literature and science, and, more than all, the religion of the West? It is a fact strikingly characteristic of Hindu nature, of

its aversion to change, of its want of spirit to break through the shackles that bind it. Rajender did not even pretend to regard the sacrifice with anything but contempt. . . .

To Mrs. S. P. Cleveland

CALCUTTA, November 4, 1849.

MY DEAREST SARAH, — . . . This last week there has been one of the finest nautches for a very long time given by my friends the Dutts. It was continued for three nights, and on Thursday, the second night, English and Americans were invited. Ritchie and I had been dining out and did not get there till very late, but quite in time for the show. The house is situated in a narrow lane, about midway between two streets. At each end of the lane arches had been erected and illuminated with myriads of lamps. All along each side of the lane were brilliantly painted clay figures, modelled from pictures, by native artists. Many of them were from Shakespeare and Scott; there were Hamlet and Ophelia, Macbeth, King Lear and Cordelia, Anne of Geierstein, the Lady of the Lake, and very many others. The lane through all its length was brightly lighted and filled with a crowd of dark and variously dressed spectators. The durwans with their silver sticks were trying to keep a clear entrance at the door, but it was with difficulty that we pressed through, though the instant that any one of the natives saw that we were whites, they crowded to make way for us. I have described the house, I think, in one of my former letters which you may perhaps have seen. There had been no ex-

pense or labour spared in decorating it. The open square in the centre was covered with a fine carpet and hung with lights which gave it the brilliancy of a ball room. . . .

I have not described half the decorations of the court, but you will easily imagine that the effect was brilliant and striking. And when you add the mingling crowd of showily dressed Hindus, and dark-coated English and Americans, some seated round the court, watching the slow steps of the nautch girls, or listening to their nasal and unmusical songs, others gathered round a table on which were gold and silver vases of flowers, and jars of rose water and attar of roses to bestow upon the guests, others looking over the rail of the verandah upon the scene below, others passing upstairs to a room where a beautiful supper was laid out, you will believe that it was a scene which seemed to separate one very far from those of daily life at home. The next night, Friday, was the chief night of the nautch; the most distinguished singer was reserved for it, and the most distinguished guests were invited. As a particular favour I was invited, and I begged an invitation for Ritchie. Two English friends were also invited. We four were the only foreigners present. . . . Rajender had prepared a Hindu dress for me, for he said that the natives would be pleased at the conformity to their customs, and that he was even doubtful about receiving any persons in an English dress, the evening being supposed to be entirely devoted to the reception of their Hindu friends. The dress is a picturesque one and a most comfortable one for the climate. . . .

It was not enough, however, for me to change my costume, but for the evening I must change my name. They sought for one which should bear some resemblance to my own, and so gave me that of Nondolal Shan. Nondolal is the name of one of the gods and its meaning is "joyous," while the meaning of "Shan," as near as may be, is "disposition." It is considered polite among the Hindus to ask a stranger his name, and so during the evening I was questioned by many guests and inmates of the house, — Tumhara nam hya hai? Your name, what is it? and when I replied it seemed to afford much amusement.

The most distinguished guests of the evening were the grandsons of Tippoo Sahib.[1] They receive a very large pension from government, and the farce is still kept up, of treating them in some sort as state prisoners. For instance I heard that they had even to apply for permission on so slight an occasion as attending the nautch, and they were accompanied by a government attendant with a sword by his side and holding a sheathed dagger in his hand, who stood by them throughout the evening. They were received in the large upper room where the supper had been laid the previous night, and only the chief guests were admitted here to meet them. I was introduced to two of them, one quite young but very bright and speaking English well. The head of the family of Tippoo has invited me to come to see them at their house, which is some miles out of town. He has offered to show me the memorials which they have of Tippoo,

[1] Sultan of Mysore, killed at the storming of Seringapatam, 1799.

and has promised me an autograph of his which I shall be delighted to get to add to Father's collection.[1] But to return to the nautch. In this upper room was the most distinguished of the nautch girls performing before the umeers. The slow dancing or rather gliding movement is very little cared for, it has little grace, and after commencing with it for a few moments the girl sits down on the floor to sing. This girl, whose name is Hera, is the most celebrated of all for her voice. It is low, but as far as I could judge not a complete contralto. The accompaniment of stringed instruments is entirely ad libitum, and is constantly, I think, in one key, and not very loud. Still, as the singer and the musicians have no concert you often hear discords. . . . To a stranger the music is quite uninteresting, but I have no doubt it would become less so the more you heard, particularly if you knew anything of the science, for it is cultivated as a science, of Hindu music.

In the course of the evening Rajender took us up to the terraced roof of the house. The scene here was more striking than any other. The moon was shining brilliantly over the quiet city and mingled its light with that of the lamps below to show the moving and picturesque crowd that filled the lane. Looking down through the network you could see the bright and pretty scene in the inner court, the strains of the music came up and the noise of animated voices. Over one part of the roof was an awning spread, and under this

[1] Norton's pleasure in collections — autographs, coins, books, engravings — began in boyhood and continued throughout his life.

were a hundred Brahmins feasting. Here we Christians could not approach. The chief duty of a Hindu is hospitality, and at this festival it is unbounded. Any one who chose to enter the door was received as a guest and food was offered to him. The numbers that had eaten in that house that day were to be reckoned by thousands. It was a curious sight to see these men at that hour, in that place engaged in feasting. It spoke of a state of things so different from that which we enjoy! so different indeed that it seems difficult to connect the two by any common bond. There is one bond, however, of which there was a striking instance that night in that very house, the bond of sorrow and suffering. Rajender has an only daughter, one of the most beautiful, as I hear, of Hindu children. According to the usual custom, she was betrothed very young; she is now but twelve, and six months ago her husband died. This is the heaviest calamity that can fall upon a Hindu family, for the girl is condemned to perpetual widowhood and seclusion, a fearful condemnation for a woman educated as the Hindu women are. As Rajender on that evening was taking his evening meal in his room his daughter came in. He had not spoken to her before since her husband's death. "I could bear it no longer," he said to me, "and I spoke to her." The fountains of sorrow that, though checked, were not dry, burst out again. In the inner rooms where the sounds of the festivity that was going on around did not come, the mother of Rajender and his poor daughter were sitting alone. . . .

Of Norton's travels into the interior of India his letters after he left Calcutta on November 8 contain many details. There were hardships and adventures of many kinds. One night, when accompanied only by the native bearers of his palanquin, he was lost — as it seemed for a time, hopelessly — in the jungle. A pleasanter experience was the meeting at Ghazipur with his classmate, Fitzedward Hall.[1] "Hall is working very hard" — he wrote to his sister Jane from Benares, November 18, 1849 — "and very successfully in the study of the Indian languages and literature. There are few scholars who know more of them, and as he intends to devote many years further to their pursuit, I have no doubt that he will much distinguish himself as an Oriental scholar. We of course had much to say to each other; he had many inquiries to make with regard to old friends and matters at home, I had many with regard to India." Of the news which suddenly turned the traveller's face towards home, and of the general impression produced upon him by the East, then so much more distant than now from the West, the following letter to a cousin gives account: —

To Charles H. Mills

Stm'r VICTORIA,
Halfway between BOMBAY and ADEN, February 9, 1850.

. . . On the second of January I reached Agra, and found there a very short note from Mr. Bullard of the 24th October, telling me of the dangerous illness of my Father. I felt at once that my only course was to get to

[1] Later distinguished as an Orientalist in India and England.

Bombay, where I should find later accounts, as rapidly as possible. I wrote to Forbes & Co. to take a passage for me in the steamer, and I left Agra as soon as I could make arrangements for the journey. Travelling as speedily as I could I was twenty-six days in reaching Bombay. They were days of very painful suspense. The news which I found at the end of my journey was even better than I had hoped. I still, however, determined to retain my passage in the steamer, and I have considerably changed my plans for the next summer. I am much obliged to you, my dear friend, for writing to me as frankly as you did, and for counselling my return. From what I have said you will see that it was my own thought when I first heard of my Father's illness, and I should adhere to it now were not the last accounts so encouraging, and did not my Mother and Sisters urge me to remain away. — I desire, however, to be near home during the next six months, both that I may have frequent and speedy news and in order to be where I can return quickly if any circumstances should render my presence at home desirable. As the summer is usually the most trying period for my Father's health, I should not be at ease were I then travelling in Turkey or Germany. I intend to proceed at once to Paris, to spend a month there and then go to England, where I shall remain if my news from home is good through the summer. . . .

The first four months of the five which I spent in India were filled with a constant succession of varied pleasures and interests. I felt only that regret that must always accompany the traveller at not being able to

see *everything* in the country through which he passes; —perhaps the more poignantly because I could not reasonably expect ever to have another opportunity to visit what I miss now. However, I have seen a great deal. Some one asked me the other day what I would first choose of all I have seen here, to see again. Certainly the view of the Snowy Range of the Himalayas from Landour, — and yet I hardly know why I should choose this, for it is a view that once seen can never be forgotten, and need not to be seen again on account of its fading from the memory. This is almost the only point of the natural scenery of India which I have seen that is not easily to be paralleled or surpassed elsewhere. . . . With almost all that relates to the character and condition of the people, and the Government I have been disappointed. My previous anticipations had been raised too high, and I think that generally the impression one would get from books would be much too favourable. The Hindus have advanced to a certain degree of civilization and there stopped, a very small minority of them advancing under the influence and example of the English. The common people unite many of the vices of barbarism and civilization. The idea of truth seems extinct in the nation, and the higher qualities of the character are developed in very rare and uncertain instances. I have seen but one native, whether Hindu, Mussulman, Parsee, or professed Christian, that I respect, — that one is my Calcutta friend, Rajender Dutt.

The Government is in fact an absolute one, — and, as its authority is very much divided, it is exposed in

some instances to be very much abused. There are cases consequently of great oppression. The means and the attention of the Government have been unfortunately very much engrossed by the frequent wars and the true interests of the people much neglected. The internal resources of India have scarcely begun to be developed.

I have not adopted these views hastily or without consideration, and not more from what I myself have observed than from what I have heard from others much better able to judge on these subjects. . . .

The ship on which Norton sailed from Bombay brought him to Suez on the 22d of February, 1850. On the 26th he wrote to his family from Alexandria, describing the journey across the desert, a glimpse of Cairo and the Pyramids, and his arrival at Alexandria itself. Egypt, and all it suggested, awakened his liveliest interest. From Alexandria, Norton, with some of his shipmates, proceeded to Smyrna on the way to Trieste and Italy. At Smyrna there was an experience of a Turkish quarantine, the record of which even after more than sixty years may bring to the traveller who knows the East some impression of similar horrors. It is taken from a family letter dated, "In the harbour of Syra, March 13, 1850": —

I had scarcely finished my letter the other day when we were called to go on shore to the lazaretto, and after being allowed to walk for half a mile along the beach, we were taken inside and locked up, with the prospect of spending three days in a miserable house and a

dirty yard of perhaps an acre in extent, round which ran a high wall. The lazaretto, we had been told, was the best in the Levant; if so, it would be difficult for the strongest to conceive the worst. On entering the two rooms which were set apart for our party of five, Anderson, Bellow, Gaedertz, Davidson and myself, there was not a single article of furniture to be discovered. The windows were broken, there was no fireplace, the floor and walls were covered with dirt, and had it not been for the fine view of the harbour, the whole would have been as cheerless accommodations as could well be found. We set to work at once to make them less so. We wrote to the landlord of the hotel in the city to send us the necessary articles of furniture, and to make arrangements to supply us with meals. We sent for a glazier to mend the windows, and then, finding the rooms too uncomfortable to stay in, went out to walk up and down the yard. Certainly if the place had been devised to make well people ill, no more sufficient means could have been adopted. We were thrust in here with a quantity of dirty Turks and dirtier Greeks and dirtiest Abyssinians. Here was a Jew merchant named Barabbas, there was a little fellow from Egypt, who must have been a tailor, so weak and pining was the voice with which he accompanied his performance on a thin two-stringed lute. But weak as it was, it was listened to with evident admiration by an audience of two or three of his companions who sat around him on the grass smoking thir tchibougues and narghiles. I cannot understand the charm of Oriental music. I have heard a good deal of it, and never any that I would not rather have been out of hearing of.

In our corner of the yard was a burying-ground; a little space in it was allotted to Christians, but the greater portion was filled with Mussulman graves. The attendants at the Quarantine were all withered and decrepit men who looked like the attendants in an Oriental bath, as if their employment wasted their health and their energy. Spite of all these discouraging circumstances, we kept up good heart for some time. The day passed slowly, for we had nothing to do but walk or sit on the rocks which were in our portion of the enclosure, and smoke. At last it got to be four o'clock, and no answer from the hotel. We grew a little hungry, and a little cross. Five o'clock, half past five, the matter was becoming serious — nothing to eat and nowhere to sleep. At last the gate of the quarantine opened, and one chair came in. We hailed it with joy, and were just about to cheer in the expectation of something being about to follow the chair, when, instead of walking upstairs into our rooms, it turned into that of a Turk below. A moment of depression equal to the previous one of exhilaration followed. We proposed to draw lots to see who should sacrifice himself for the common good. The sun was setting when, in the midst of our deliberations, the guard announced to us that there were two boats coming from the town. They were indeed for us, and in a half an hour we were having a capital dinner and five substitutes for beds were standing in various corners of the rooms. . . . But we were not sorry when Friday came and we were at liberty to get out of quarantine as quickly as we chose.

Before the end of March the traveller came to Venice, where he spent two happy weeks, making his first acquaintance with the country from which so many of his later interests were drawn. The approach to Europe by way of India, the introduction to a civilization older than our own after having observed one older still, was in itself an experience both rare and advantageous. The letters to his family and friends overflow with enthusiasm for the pictures, the architecture, — the significance of all that he saw. "My first European experiences," he wrote, "have even surpassed my anticipations. Who was ever disappointed in Venice?" Then came Padua, Vicenza, Verona, Milan, Turin, Lyons — and Paris, where he was to pass more than a month filled with novel, enlightening contacts with life. Before reaching Paris the socially disposed young man had depended chiefly for companionship on the chance acquaintances of travel. The conditions of this sojourn, however, were very different from any experience he had had since leaving home; for not only was he provided with excellent letters of introduction from his uncle, George Ticknor, Edward Everett, and other American friends, but he had the good fortune to meet, within a few days of his arrival, a Boston friend of his family, Joseph Coolidge, who immediately befriended his young countryman and secured him many opportunities for meeting some of the most interesting persons in Paris. Through these various means he soon found himself on agreeable terms with the households of Mr. Rives, the American minister, Lady Elgin and her daughters, Lady Charlotte and Lady Augusta Bruce — who afterwards

married, first, Frederick Locker, and later Arthur Penrhyn Stanley;—the Count and Countess Circourt,[1] and Mrs. Childe, the sister of General Robert E. Lee. Rachel he saw in many rôles; he paid frequent visits to the studio of Ary Scheffer, and availed himself of every chance to turn his delightful opportunities to good account. Lessons in French and dancing occupied part of his time. As in India he had taken pains to find good Cashmere shawls for his cousins in Boston, in Paris he bought bonnets for his sisters. Altogether the weeks were crowded to the full.

At the Circourts' Norton met Mlle. Von Arnim, the daughter of Goethe's Bettina, and in one of his letters he testified unconsciously to his own youthfulness by writing: "Unfortunately she is no longer very young. I imagine she may be twenty-eight or thirty." The great freedom of speech in which one American lady indulged herself was an amazement to him: "However," he wrote, "I am away for the sake of seeing the world on all its sides and in all its various lights and shades, so that I am glad to have made Mrs. ——'s acquaint-

[1] In later years Norton wrote in a letter to Edward Lee-Childe, Gen. Lee's nephew: "Did you see an entertaining article of Grant Duff's in the *Nineteenth Century* for August on Senior's Conversations? I was pleased at his mention of Madame de Circourt and interested in the notice of her by Sainte-Beuve which I had never before seen, but I could not but wish that he had drawn her character with fuller delineation of the traits that made her exceptional and gave to her so rare an attraction. I was about to write 'attractiveness,' but she had perhaps too much finesse, and her natural sentiment had been too much intellectualized to leave her this charm. Is it too subtile a distinction to say that one was attracted *to* her, rather than attracted *by* her? Are there any *salons* such as hers left? Is there a single *salon* in Paris in which 'l'intelligence donne comme droit de cité, without question of party in politics or in philosophy?"

ance." In other passages the application of native standards to what he saw reveals itself, with a pleasant touch of almost boyish candour.

One morning he went to a concert given by amateurs for a charitable object, and by good fortune had a seat on the stage.

"The great thing of the morning," he wrote in a family letter (May 14, 1850), "which almost deprived the music of its interest, was a recitation by Mlle. Rachel of three scenes from 'Virginie.' I was sitting where I could see her perfectly, where I could hear every sound of her voice, and I thought that I had never seen a woman who united so much beauty, so much power of expression, so much elegance of figure, and so much grace of motion, and that I had never heard a voice so rich and so affecting. I was delighted to have such an opportunity of seeing her off the stage, in an everyday dress. The effect of her talent was very visible at the conclusion of the concert when there was a collection taken by the ladies. Everybody seemed desirous to put a contribution into the purse that she carried, as if it had been an offering to her genius, and the titled ladies carried round their purses almost unattended and neglected. It quite gratified my republicanism."

There are many allusions in the letters to Ary Scheffer and his pictures — how far removed from Norton's liking in later years!

To Mrs. S. P. Cleveland

PARIS, 16 May, 1850.

. . . Another great pleasure which I owe also in part to you has been the seeing of Scheffer and his pictures. It was a pleasant coincidence to find that two of the letters which Charles [1] so kindly sent me would serve as introductions to Scheffer. I dined with Scheffer and Mme. Scheffer on Monday. There were three or four other people at dinner and I had a delightful time. Scheffer is one of those men, as it seems to me, who prove a very favourite theory of mine — that the greatest and most poetical imagination can only be developed in connection with, and is always accompanied by sound sense and practical understanding; that imagination of the *highest* kind cannot exist where these qualities are deficient. Did you ever hear that in the days of June the battalion of National Guards of which Scheffer is the major was the first one that was called out, — that he commanded it during the four days, and was at his post and often in the fight during that time? This was quite fine.

I was much pleased with a little discussion which came up during dinner, and in supporting which I had no part, with regard to the merits of modern poets. Scheffer declared that he preferred to any other Mr. Longfellow, the American; that there was in his works, particularly in "Evangeline," great beauty of poetical description. Was not this quite charming? . . .

[1] Mrs. Cleveland's brother, C. C. Perkins.

To Samuel E. Guild

PARIS, 23 May, 1850.

. . . I went last night with Count Circourt to see Lamartine, who receives visitors every evening. He has pleasant apartments; the one in which you first enter is filled with copies of his own recent publications, and has very much the air of a wholesale bookstore. The next room is apparently the dining-room, and this opens into the drawing-room. It was quite dark twilight when we went in; there were no lamps, however, in the room, and it was difficult to distinguish any one in the dusk. Before long a lamp was brought in, and I could then study Lamartine's face. His forehead and nose are fine, but his head is narrow, and his mouth is very weak. He is tall and has a good presence. His wife, a woman of no beauty, and whom it is said he treats with much neglect, was sitting next him on the sofa. There were perhaps ten or twelve people beside ourselves in the room. Nothing could be duller, nothing more stupid, than the manner in which the evening passed. The conversation was carried on for the most part in whispers. Lamartine was surrounded by a circle of admirers to whom he talked in a low tone of his own works. No man was ever vainer than Lamartine. His tone last night with regard to his works was that of continual praise of what he had done. There is a story very current here now of his having gone the other day to witness the representation of his last play, "Toussaint Louverture," and, apparently being very much struck with one passage in the drama, he

was heard to exclaim, "Ah, mon Dieu! How beautiful that is! What a magnificent idea! Only the greatest poet could have reached such sublimity!"

If this is not true, it is certainly ben trovato. His house seems like a temple dedicated to his honour. I counted nine portraits of him in the room where we were; to begin with, there was a full length in oils, then there was a half length, then a bust, two medallions, an engraving, and two or three miniatures. I was told that in the three rooms there were twenty-two likenesses of him. What little space was left on the walls unoccupied by portraits, was filled with pictures in oils by Madame de Lamartine. . . . I imagine that she burns a good deal of incense on the altars of her husband for the sake of the perfume that is wafted back upon herself. She told me something about her husband's mode of life. He is at work writing every morning at six o'clock; — he employs himself in this way until one or two, then goes down to the Assembly, remains there till five or six, returns to dinner, receives visitors early in the evening, and goes to bed always in very good season. This simple statement was interspersed with various digressions on the marvellous powers of M. de Lamartine; how his mind was adapted to grasp everything, and how incredible was the amount of work which he accomplished.[1]

It is difficult to understand how a man of such

[1] The following sentence from a family letter (of earlier date) is of some interest here: — "Mr. Longfellow told Charles that talking one day with Sainte-Beuve of Victor Hugo and Lamartine, he (Sainte-Beuve) quietly remarked, after saying this, that, and the other of the two authors: "Mais, charlatan pour charlatan, je préfère Lamartine.'"

undoubted genius as Lamartine should at the same time be so weak. His political influence still remains very great, and in case of a struggle between the people and the present Government, he will have much power in repressing popular excesses. At least, so it is said here. . . .

Norton recurs to Lamartine in a letter of June 4 to his family: "À propos to an unfinished but very excellent portrait of Lamartine, Scheffer told us that Lamartine was in the atelier the other day, and stopped to look at this portrait. After gazing at it for some time, he said, without turning from it, 'There is much beauty in that countenance; but the beauty has been shattered by the ravages of the storms of politics.' The stories which are heard of Lamartine's vanity would be almost incredible were they not confirmed and repeated on every side. Some of them are too bad to tell. By a little skilful drawing out one can any day induce him to say that he is physically superb and morally sublime."

Political conditions in France were fully discussed in Norton's letters. One day at the Assembly he heard a debate in which Cavaignac was followed by Victor Hugo who "made a more poetical and more exciting speech, and at the same time able oratorically and logically. He was brutally treated by the Right, who jeered and sneered at him as if he were a fool."

Alfred de Vigny, De Tocqueville, and other important figures in the Paris of the day, Norton met at Mrs. Childe's and elsewhere. But the most important of all his meetings, in its relation to the years to come, was

that with George William Curtis. Writing in later years of this meeting, Norton said: "Another great pleasure which Paris gave me was falling in one evening at the Café de Paris with Quincy Shaw, who introduced me to his companion, long-haired and sweet-visaged George Curtis. We were much together during my stay in Paris, and this was the beginning of the friendship which was to mean much to me during the remainder of my life." Curtis at the time was on his way home from Egypt, provided with the material for his first book, "Nile Notes of an Howadji," soon to be published. Norton's stay in Paris was near its end, but here, and immediately afterwards in England, the two young men frequently dined and amused themselves together, little thinking how their lives were to be interwoven.

Though expecting to miss the Ascot races in England through staying in Paris one day longer than he intended, the desire to see Rachel once more, in "Phèdre," held him, and was rewarded by an enthusiastic delight. On the 6th of June he left Paris with Quincy A. Shaw, and after fifteen hours of hard travel arrived late at night in London.

The first London letter of this period is dated June 6, the last September 13, 1850. The intervening months, passed chiefly in London, but with many excursions to other parts of England, and as far north in Scotland as Inverness, are profusely chronicled in family letters. Again the details are rather for the interested home-circle than for the readers of biography sixty years after. For them the knowledge

that the receptive young traveller was extraordinarily fortunate in his opportunities to see the best of England, and a few passages of observation and reflection, will suffice.

A bit of literary comment appears in a letter of June 21 to Mrs. Ticknor: "Tennyson, it is said, is to be Poet Laureate, simply because there is no great poet in England to take the place. His new volume, 'In Memoriam,' in memory of his friend, Arthur Hallam, excites very different judgments. Everybody here says there is no poet in England to be compared with Mr. Longfellow."

A breakfast with Mrs. Browning's elderly cousin, John Kenyon, who showed much friendliness to the young American at this time and later, is reported in a family letter of June 27: "I breakfasted on Sunday morning with Mr. Kenyon, Mr. Crabb Robinson being the third at table. Mr. Kenyon was kind and cordial. Mr. Robinson is an old man of seventy-five, genial and amiable, living in his past long friendships with Wordsworth and Lamb (I meant to put Lamb's name first) and supporting a vivid self-appreciation by heat reflected from their blaze. Almost the first words he said to me were: 'I know your father. I have a great respect for him. I have his books, and I 've read them all.' . . . The conversation at breakfast was about Coleridge, Wordsworth, and the monument that is to be erected (a statue) to his memory at Westminster Abbey, about Lamb and Talfourd, and other literary men and things. 'Of all the men whom I have ever known, and I have known most of the distinguished

literary men of Germany and England during my life, Charles Lamb was to me most to be loved,' said Mr. Robinson. Mr. Kenyon told a good story about Cottle and his poetry, which he had heard from Southey. When Southey and Coleridge were at Bristol, Cottle sent them a copy of verses with a request that they would look them over and correct them. When they had done this, they found that they had left but little of the original, and one of them proposed to correct still a little more, and leave Cottle only the 'ifs,' the 'ands,' and the 'buts.' Having done this, they sent the verses to Cottle, and he published them in this shape as his own!"

Andrews Norton's old friend, Joanna Baillie, was still alive, and more than one visit of piety was paid to her. As in Paris, letters of introduction opened the way to many social interests for the youth; and intercourse with agreeable Americans, especially the Russell Sturgis household, provided frequent informal hospitalities. Sydney Smith's prophecy, "When Prescott comes to England, a Caspian Sea of soap awaits him," was in process of fulfilment, and the historian's young fellow-countryman wrote home, "Mr. Prescott and the hippopotamus are dividing the attention of the literary and scientific world here: I do not know which receives the most visitors." It is evident that Norton stood where he could look with advantage upon the social panorama of the time. A day at the Ascot races, sight-seeing expeditions with the new friend Curtis, a glimpse of the Queen and her family at Carisbrooke, a fête at Holland House with

Richard Monckton Milnes for a companion — the catalogue and record of pleasant opportunities might be extended indefinitely.

Through the eyes of older friends, the previous generation of Englishmen revealed themselves. After a tête-à-tête dinner with John Kenyon, Norton wrote to his mother: "We talked much this evening of Coleridge and of Wordsworth. Mr. Kenyon said that much as he admired and respected Wordsworth, there was hardly a more disagreeable man in some positions; that he was very selfish, and, as Sara Coleridge said of him, his sensibility seemed to be *in* him and not *of* him. Coleridge once said that if Wordsworth had a coat of arms, the crest should be a laurel crown, and the supporters, a bishop on the one side, and an attorney on the other. He was a man weak enough to care for the distinctions of rank, and to bow to them, and if you, his best friend, said Mr. Kenyon, met him in a party of lords and bishops, it was very likely that he would not know you while they were in the room. We talked, too, of Rogers, of Miss Mitford, who is still living at Three Mile Cross, and who, being relieved from the necessity of writing, has laid aside her pen, to live quietly on her narrow but sufficient income."

Even a reported censure of Wordsworth, one feels, strikes a note uncommon in this early correspondence, of which a final quotation from the letters written before leaving England is more typical: "Of the last few days, I have nothing but agreeable and entertaining experiences to record. No one ever travelled for so long a time with so few disagreeable incidents as I

have done. But all my life has been free from even common troubles, and the whole past is but a record of happiness and good fortune. It depends only on myself to make the future so with God's help."

Early in September Norton went from England to the Continent, for nearly four months more of travel and sight-seeing before returning to America. From Paris, where he took keen pleasure in a renewal of intercourse with Curtis, he proceeded rapidly to Switzerland; then on to Munich, Vienna, and to Italy, arriving in Venice at the beginning of November. From Basle he wrote on September 26 as one almost overwhelmed by the beautiful scenes through which he was passing, "oppressed with wealth and with abundance sad," and added: "There is another feeling which such travelling forces upon one, upon me in particular, with unpleasant distinctness — the consciousness of my ignorance. I know so little about what I see compared to what is to be known, there are such treasures of history, and of romance, such studies of art and of life which I have never even approached, and which I long to unfold. I know enough to awaken my enthusiasm and my admiration, but I feel as if it were a waste of opportunities to see so much and not to know more." The many long and detailed letters of these final months of travel show that with what he saw he was constantly acquiring a sound knowledge of historic backgrounds, and was alive to their significance. From the mass of recorded experience and impressions it must suffice to preserve the account of his friendly recep-

tion by the Brownings at Florence in November and December, to whom he came bearing messages from John Kenyon.

FLORENCE, Saturday, November 16, 1850.

MY DEAREST MOTHER, — . . . I returned to my rooms stopping by the way at a bookstore, and giving myself a birthday present of Vasari and Machiavelli. I sat down at my table to write a letter to Child, and had not finished it when I heard a knock at my door and opening it saw my friend Mr. Black, of whom I wrote you from London. . . . He had heard of me from Mr. Browning, and had most kindly come at once to see me. He made me a very pleasant visit and I am going to dine with him tomorrow. He had hardly gone when there was another knock and in came Mr. Browning himself. I left Mr. Kenyon's letter for him yesterday, and he told me that he had been to see me this morning and, not having found me, had come again this afternoon. This was certainly very kind. He has little the appearance of a poet, but I must see him again and talk more with him before I tell you of him. Our conversation this afternoon was principally about his American friends; both he and Mr. Black, like many celebrated Englishmen, are fond of Americans and profess to prefer those whom they have known to the great majority of their own countrymen. Mr. Browning told me that his wife's health was so delicate that they exercised only the simplest hospitality, but that they would be glad to see me on any evening and whenever

I liked to come. I shall go to see them on Monday or Tuesday. So you see I shall have a very pleasant time in Florence with such acquaintances. . . .

Monday afternoon.

I have to tell you of a visit yesterday to Santa Croce, of a charming dinner with Mr. and Mrs. Black and their children at their villa out of town, of a forenoon to-day at the unsurpassable gallery of the Pitti Palace, and now, for it is five hours later than when I began to write, of a very pleasant evening with Mr. and Mrs. Browning. It is indeed too late for me to tell you of all these to-night, and I will only write a little about the Brownings of whom you will care to hear more than of anything else. I had formed, as you have, imaginations with regard to both of them from their works and from the accounts which we have heard of them, — but I confess my imaginations were much at fault so far as I can judge from this first time of seeing them. They live in a house which is decorated with the name of the Palazzo Guidi, though it has nothing palatial in its character except its size, not far from the Pitti Palace. I found them to-night sitting in a pleasant home-like room, surrounded with pictures and books, with an open fire shedding a genial light through it. I had hardly entered when a Mr. Stuart, an Englishman, accompanied by an Italian gentleman, came in. This I regretted for of course the conversation became more general and less interesting to me than if I had been alone with Mr. and Mrs. Browning. Browning himself has a pleasant

open expression and manner, and neither in his looks or conversation resembles the idea one would receive of him from his poems. There is nothing obscure, nothing different from what you would expect from any man of taste and letters in his conversation. His manners are quite simple, he claims nothing for himself, and does not suggest or call upon you to recognize in any way that he is a poet. Mrs. Browning is even more slight and delicate in her appearance than I had supposed. Her manners are reserved and timid, her voice is low and she joined but little in the conversation. You feel as if she were so distrustful of herself that she kept back the expression of her sentiments and thoughts from all but those with whom she was familiar, — and, knowing what those thoughts and sentiments must be, you long so to win her confidence as to lead her to express them to you. Her face is pleasing, but like her voice and manner is melancholy and quiet, but full of sensibility. You would not believe from it that she had written as she has. You would believe her to have been the most delicate and sensitive of poets, not one to have written poems which show as hers do very great intellectual strength and power of expression. — These are my first impressions — two or three weeks hence I will write you later ones. . . .

[November 28.]

. . . I returned from the Brownings about ten, and then instead of writing to you I sat down before my fire to look over Mazzini's last publication, "Foi et Avenir," which Mr. Browning had lent me. . . . I had

a most pleasant evening with the Brownings. They were alone, and it gave a charming opportunity for seeing them. They had been much interested by a visit from a grandson of Goethe's, a young man of twenty-five or six. They spoke of him as very simple and very German in his style, — and one would imagine that his character was wonderfully Teutonic, for four or five years ago he published a poem and a Latin treatise in three volumes on Man and Elementary Nature! Mrs. Browning said that he did not seem to resemble very much his grandfather, and told me of a remark he made, "that he felt that he was not an artist, for he was conscious of moral preferences." This is certainly an advance on Goethe. I said that I did not think that he took the right view of an artist, and Mrs. Browning agreed with me very earnestly, — one could not doubt from her poems that she would do so. We talked much about Italy, and about modern Italian literature, which Browning spoke of as in quite as low a state as her art, — and about the Catholic religion and the increasing protestantism and infidelity in Italy, and the low character of the generality of the priests. Browning told me a story to illustrate the operation of the religion on the lower classes, which had come under his own knowledge and which, if it were not true, would be considered an exaggerated satire. Some time during the last year a family were living in the upper story of the house of which they occupy a part, and took a poor Italian woman for a servant. She had not been with them very long when they suspected her honesty and upon

watching her they detected her in stealing. She had, as they discovered, taken many articles and some fifty dollars in money, and in order to avert the punishment in purgatory which her thefts might bring upon her, she had stolen candles, which she daily burned before a shrine of the Virgin. She had also confessed, the priest had not told her to make restitution, but to say certain Ave Marias and perform certain penances. She was brought by her master before the proper judicial tribunal (and this illustrates the justice here), her thefts were proved although she horribly perjured herself, and she was ordered to give up the money which had been found in her possession, but she was discharged without punishment, — the judge refused to put her into prison because it would be expensive to keep her there! She restored those of the stolen goods and property which had been found in her possession, of course not that which she had secreted, and with the proceeds of this last she set up a small shop in the city which Browning said he could show me any day. This is worse than the state of things among the Hindus, — and that woman is encouraged in wickedness by the religion and the justice of the country. *Ex uno disce omnia.*" . . .

THE GULF OF GENOA, December 13, 1850.

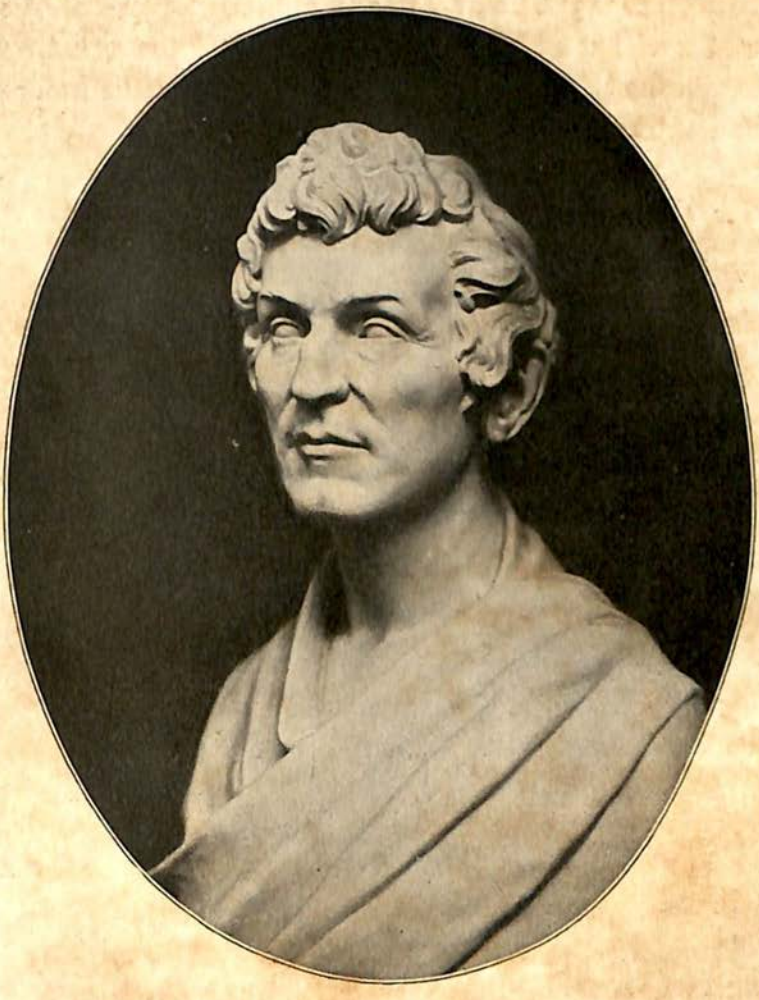
. . . I told you that I had spent Friday evening with the Brownings. They were then most pleasant, and when I left them with no thought of being about to say Good-bye to Florence so soon, I promised to come and spend another evening with them before many

days were over. The next day I got your letters and set about making my preparations to leave Florence on Tuesday. I had lent my copy of Uncle Ticknor's book to Mr. Browning and I wrote to him telling him of my change of plans and begging him to let me have it again. On Monday I was out all the morning taking a last look at some of my favourite places and a first at sights which I had not seen before, and I returned to my room in the afternoon. I was in good fortune, for as I went up the steps Browning was just knocking at my door, having himself brought back the book. He came in and sat with me for an hour talking most agreeably. The more that I saw of him and of Mrs. Browning the more did I discover in them the characteristics which their poetry would lead one to believe them to possess. Browning's conversation is remarkable and often very striking. His thoughts flow quickly, he uses many figures, but always apposite ones, he has a store of pleasant anecdotes, and he says everything with such entire straightforward earnestness that one cannot but like him. He is quite unconscious and never even in the slightest way claims any regard for himself as a poet, or shows that he expects you to remember that he is one. Indeed one of the most charming characteristics of both him and his wife is their self-forgetfulness. When he left me I promised to spend Tuesday evening with them, for I had then determined not to leave Florence until Thursday. . . . With the books which he brought back was a most kind note, for he had thought that he might not see me again. So Tuesday evening I

spent with Mr. and Mrs. Browning, and of course I had a charming evening. Mrs. Browning seemed better and stronger than I had ever seen her, she talked more than usual and was only too kind to me. Her last words as I bade her good-bye were, — "You will be sure that your sisters let us know as soon as they arrive in Florence, for we shall be very glad to see them." The next morning Browning met me at eleven and went with me to look at some pictures on which I wanted his judgment. . . . The pictures, however, did not please him much, and he thought the prices too high; so I determined not to take them . . . . From the picture dealer's we walked together to the gallery of the Academy, and looked through its treasures, then we went to see Mr. Greenough, and then, after going to see the fresco by Raphael of the Last Supper, we parted. He spoke again to me of letting him and his wife know whenever you reached Florence, and said that he should be very glad to do anything in his power for you, while his wife whose delicacy prevented her from exercising any active hospitality would be glad to see you. . . .

This letter of December 13 was written on the way from Italy to Paris, where for several days Norton was constantly with the Circourts, Scheffer, and others whom he had met six months before. These days were followed by a brief stay, no less fortunate in its repeated opportunity for meeting "kindly old John Kenyon" and other friends, in London, on the way to Liverpool. Landing in New York on January 18, 1851,

—in time for his sister Louisa's marriage, on the 27th,—Norton brought home a wealth of maturing experience and a vision of life then quite beyond the common attainment of a youth who only two months before had entered upon his twenty-fourth year.



ANDREWS NORTON

CHAPTER III

NEWPORT AND SHADY HILL

(1851–1855)

NORTON'S return from India and Europe, after nearly two years of travel, and an amount of experience out of proportion to his actual adventures, was the occasion for the happiest reunion of a singularly united family. Though his father's improved condition after his serious illness at the end of 1849 had justified the extended stay in Europe, his health was much broken, and the resumption of intimate daily intercourse with his son meant much to them both.

For occupation the younger man now turned the fruit of his travels to account, by engaging in East India commerce on a modest scale. The business, conducted in an office on Central Wharf, was that of shipping small ventures of cotton, indigo, and other exports to India, and importing the products of the East. It was a business of no considerable returns, but the accounts, kept in Norton's careful handwriting, still speak for the amount of detail it involved, and, through the nature of the entries, show how useful must have been the first-hand knowledge of Eastern trade which the young merchant had acquired. Office duties were not so exacting as to keep him from the literary pursuits for which his travels and his taste also prepared him; these pursuits appear indeed to

have won him more and more to themselves, so that by 1855 his business career had come gradually to an end.

So fully and affectionately was young Norton under his father's influence in these early years that it was natural for him to take an active part in the conduct of the Unitarian Sunday-school at Cambridge, and equally natural was the little book he published in 1852: a collection of "Five Christmas Hymns."

There is a family tradition that when the son, about ten years old, was seriously ill, and suspected through overhearing some words of the doctor that his life was in danger, he said to his mother: "I wish I could live, so that I could edit Father's works." This quaintly precocious desire was now to be realized. In September, 1853, Andrews Norton died. His son, in collaboration with Ezra Abbot, his father's friend, almost immediately set about preparing for the press "A Translation of the Gospels," intended to promote "a just appreciation of the evidence of their truth afforded by their internal character," one of the most laborious of the works of Andrews Norton's life. From the preface to the book, published in 1855, it appears that the editorial responsibility, as regards the translation, was limited, with little exception, to a careful superintendence of the printing. But the burden of the notes was onerous: some existed only in memoranda; and many explanations of special passages had to be drawn from Andrews Norton's published works and manuscript lectures. This, with the preparation of a table of various readings, was, in spite of the scholarly

assistance of Ezra Abbot, a filial labor of no small magnitude. Besides the two volumes of Translations, the son also published in a small volume his father's "Poems" and, in a large one, his "Discourses."

A brief biographical account of Andrews Norton, written a few years after his death by his son, gives perhaps a clearer impression of the elder Norton than other words could convey. The beginning of the paper is lost, but toward its close his son says: —

"He was an unsparing critic of his own writing during the process of composition, — and page after page of his manuscript bears the mark of his care in the selection or rejection of words.

"He never enjoyed an opportunity of studying in Europe, and at times he felt the disadvantage under which American scholars have laboured from the want of great collections of books, and of sufficient critical apparatus. He was able, however, to procure such books as were requisite for the thorough investigation of the subjects on which he was engaged, though often exposed to delay and to inconvenience from not finding them at hand.

"His memory was strong, and his reading wide in many branches of literature. His library was gradually formed at a time when books were less plentiful than at present, but it gives evidence of the variety of his interests, and the clearness of his judgment. He was not a one-sided scholar. He was a lover of poetry, — especially of that of Shakespeare, Pope and Scott. He was fond of novel-reading, — and Scott, Miss Edgeworth and Miss Austen were among the authors

whom he was most accustomed to read for amusement. The extent and accuracy of his knowledge in general literature, in history and biography, were great, and his knowledge was always at command. Fastidious by temperament, sensitive through delicacy of health, and refined by cultivation, his intellectual sympathies were warm rather than wide. His strength of feeling in regard to personal character or influence sometimes affected the justice of his judgments of persons and of books. His feelings were always very quick on any subject of religion, morals or character, and in moments of excitement he expressed himself with a strength which did justice to his sense of the infinite value of truth upon such a subject, but not always to the real tenderness of his heart, or the generosity of his disposition.

"His imaginative faculties had never received much training, — and through a consequent deficiency in the exercise and power of imagination he sometimes neglected to take into account the variety in human nature, and to give full weight to the fact of the necessary diversity of men's opinions upon the most important subjects.

"In reviewing his habits of study and composition it seems to me that their prevailing characteristics resulted not so much from what may be called individual or personal peculiarities, as from those general principles of thought and action which guided my Father's life. They were such as might have been expected in one who was engaged in the search for Truth with a deep sense of the infinite preciousness, as

compared with all other acquisitions, of the truth in matters of religion; in one who had no personal ends to serve; and who lived conscious and mindful of the immediate presence of God."

Even before engaging in the editing of his father's books Norton had published, in 1853, his own first individual piece of work, a small volume under the title "Considerations of Some Recent Social Theories." It was a book with which his father would have been in hearty sympathy — full of the conservatism of just such a young manhood as the author had experienced, pleading for the established order of things as against any *vox populi, vox dei* theory of government, and for the practice in common action of "the spirit of Christianity."

The little book is now unknown and forgotten, and with reason, for over it has gone a flood of works of high importance upon the subject. Yet in its day, when scant attention had been given in America to the study of social theories, the book indicated a trend of thought somewhat unusual. It had its influence, and brought Norton into relation with men dealing in a practical way with some of the great questions it involved.

Through the years 1851 to 1855 the delightful family life which played so vital a part in the young man's development, continued its course — the background of Shady Hill enlarged by that of Newport, where during the young man's foreign travels his family had built a house and had become summer residents. It was a time when Newport, "like some dim, sim-

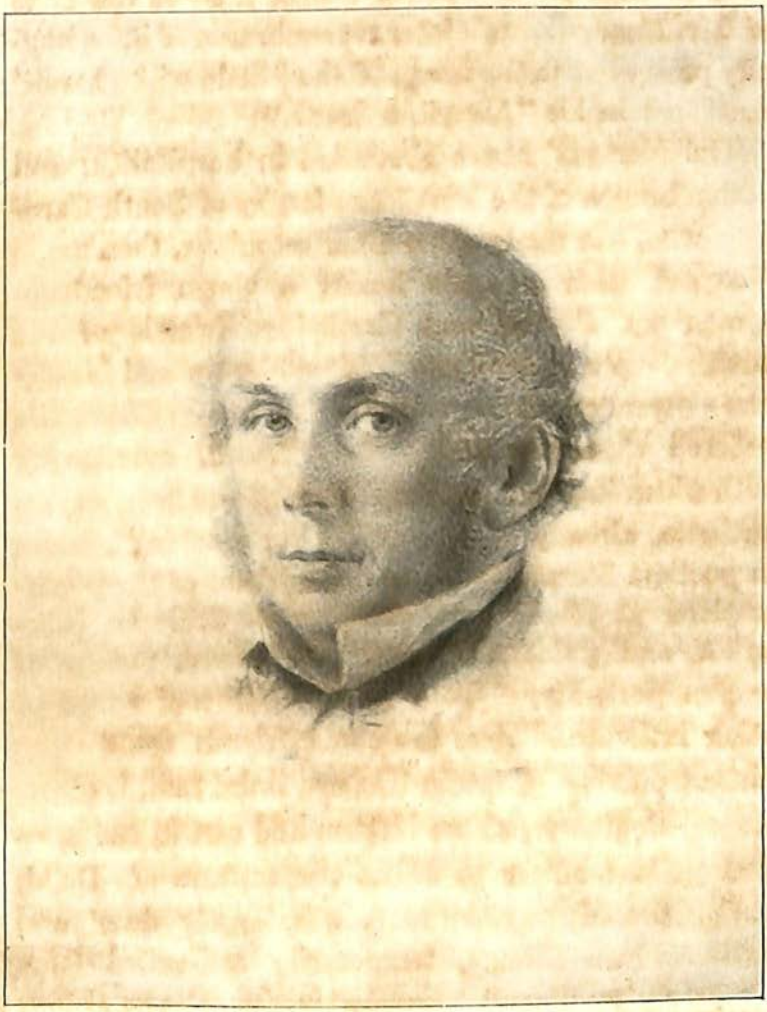
plified ghost of a small Greek Island," had perhaps even more of its distinctive charm than in the days of Mr. Henry James's later remembrance of it, so happily preserved in the image of the "little white hand" described in his "American Scene."

The Nortons' house abounded in hospitality; and with a branch of the Middleton family of South Carolina, who, like many other Charlestonians, then made Newport their summer home, a warm friendship sprang up. Boston and Cambridge friends of the young people of the household — Norton and his sisters — were constantly coming and going: Child, the beloved classmate and lifelong friend, overflowing with whimsical humour, large-hearted and keenly sympathetic, already beginning his far-reaching labours in poetical literature; Lowell, the friend of three generations at Shady Hill; William J. Stillman, journalist and painter; Samuel W. Rowse, master of crayon portraits;[1] "Tom" Appleton,[2] and a host of other intimates. Here too came friends from more distant points — Captain Richard Baird Smith, of the Bengal Engineers, whom Norton had met in India, — that gallant officer to whom the capture of Delhi, during the Mutiny, in 1857, was largely due;[3] and Arthur Hugh Clough, temporarily self-exiled from

[1] "We who knew Rowse shall remember him as one of the few whom we have known who had genuine originality of mind with depth and delicacy of sentiment. . . . To those who did not know him personally his name is likely only to recall the draughtsman of the best portrait of Emerson." (C. E. Norton to Miss Georgina Lowell, May 29, 1901.)

[2] Brother-in-law of Longfellow.

[3] "The Chief Engineer [Baird Smith] of the army before Delhi had brought to the performance of his duties the large mind, the profound knowledge, the prompt decision which had characterized him in his civil



ARTHUR H. CLOUGH

home, in the hope of finding some needed literary employment.

The personal relations with Clough were limited to his stay in America from November of 1852 to June of 1853, and to brief intercourse, later, in England; but the friendship was one of those that are measured by essential sympathy rather than by time. Clough's warm feeling about his new friend, nearly nine years his junior, was expressed in a letter to England written soon after his coming to Cambridge. "Charles Norton is the kindest creature in the shape of a young man of twenty-five that ever befriended an emigrant stranger anywhere." His relations with the Norton family are suggested by the fact that when they moved to Newport for the summer, Clough, working hard on his "Plutarch," was established at Shady Hill. It would have been strange if the cultivated, sensitive Englishman, of high-minded scruples, seeking for the truth through mists of dogma and conservatism, and feeling himself out of sympathy with much of the intellectual life that surrounded him at Oxford, had not affected Norton's view of the horizons that were traditional with him. From the active correspondence that followed Clough's return to England, and continued till his death, a clear impression may be drawn of Norton's interests and outlook

work [on the Ganges Canal, etc.] . . . It seems clear that the man to whom the capture of Delhi was mostly due was without a doubt Baird Smith, and that without detracting, in any way, from the brilliant services of Nicholson, Chamberlain, Reid, Brind, Johnson, Alexander Taylor, and others. . . ." ("Richard Baird Smith," by Colonel H. M. Vibart.)

In 1872 Norton named his youngest son for this friend of earlier years, whose valiant life had ended in 1861.

at this period. To passages from some of these letters, therefore, little need be added. A portion of a letter written while Clough was still in America, and Norton had left his family in Newport for a visit to Boston and Cambridge, helps in filling out the picture.

To Miss Grace Norton

June 15, 1853.

. . . I went down to my counting-room and remained busy and quiet till near one. Then I went to the cars, got home where Clough was waiting for me, dressed in such a superb and radiant manner as to excite . . . a threat from him that Hawthorne would be so dazzled that he would not talk, — and then we walked warmly together to Craigie House. Longfellow was pleasant and Mrs. Longfellow more beautiful than ever, and set their guests in most harmonious accord with each other and themselves. Lowell was very sparkling and full of sympathetic animation. Hawthorne was heavy and dark-browed, quiet, serious, reserved, finding it hard to say that Alcott sometimes bores him, and to praise a book called "Up-Country Letters" [1] to Mrs. Longfellow. Emerson was amiable and talked very pleasantly about various books and people and things. Sam Longfellow was modest, thoughtful and for the most part listening. Clough and I were as usual, and we had such a good time that even he was able to praise it. And yet there was nothing said at the dinner and all through the

[1] By a Connecticut writer, Lewis William Mansfield.

afternoon which I can remember to repeat. Is not that a test that everything said was good? — so good that no one saying stood out in smart preëminence over the rest.... Clough's prospects are decidedly brighter, — his health, however, is delicate, and as I knew more medicine and better how to take care of myself when I was three years old than he does now, I have been practicing upon him, which his sweet disposition renders very easy....

Another glimpse of Clough at a time when he and Norton were keeping bachelor hall together at Shady Hill exists in a letter to Norton's elder sister: —

To Miss Jane Norton

Monday, June 27, 1853.

... Yesterday went very quietly with me. The evening before I was rather tired and amused myself reading "Bleak House" till a little after eight, when Clough announced his intention of going to bed. So he went off, but he was hardly gone when Child came in.

We had just got our cigars comfortably lighted when I heard a ring at the door, and in a moment was informed that there were two gentlemen who wished to see Mr. Clough and Mr. Norton. I went down at once, and found in the entry Longfellow and with him a young man from Oxford, named Watson, who had known Clough in England, and having just arrived had come to look him up.

I told them how it was, and that I would disturb him, if they would come and sit with me. They came

up, and I went to Clough's chamber where I found him very sleepy and amiable. In a few moments he appeared in a gorgeous dressing-gown, but with very heavy eyelids. Then came a greeting such as pass between Englishmen; like the one Eothen tells of, so that you would have fancied they had met the day before. We had a pleasant talk for an hour, and about ten poor Clough got a chance to renew his slumbers. . . .

Norton soon after this, having returned to Newport, received from Child news of the friend left at Shady Hill.

From F. J. Child

CAMBRIDGE, Sunday Night, [1853.]

. . . Clough is greatly reduced by the heat. He has added an entirely new scale of sighs to his old gamut, and those which he emits at the temperature of 87 are as plaintive as Memnon's evening suspirations. On the 16 of July for the first time in his life that distinguished critic and poet tasted Soda Water, and it is the first American institution on which I have heard him bestow unqualified praise. He is not quite sure, however, that it will do in the long run, and seems to have some vague notion that chemicals, however refreshing for the moment, must corrode the vitals. I assure you I felt lonesome enough in Kirkland Street tonight. Everybody was strolling in the mild air and in a beautiful moon, and the gentle Welshman was listening to the Concord frogs and contradicting Emerson some miles away from me. . . .

To A. H. Clough

SHADY HILL, August 15, 1853.

MY DEAR CLOUGH, — I have just put your "Plutarchs" [1] up in a parcel to be sent by one of the booksellers in their bundle to-morrow to Chapman, the publisher in the Strand. If you do not call for it there he will probably send it to you. I wish I had something else to put in the parcel for you. I was tempted to put in Tuckerman's "Memorial of Horatio Greenough," which is just out and is now lying on the table before me, — but I reflected that you would say, Oh, what's the use of confusing one's-self over all this modern stuff, — nothing's been done in art since Phidias and nothing said about it since Aristotle that it concerns us to know! — and, moreover, I have not yet looked at the book enough to know whether it really would be worth sending from its intrinsic merit; — and, still further, I saw that it began with a quotation from "In Memoriam" which I was quite sure you would think a very bad beginning.

I do not recollect whether you ever saw Greenough. I think you may have met him at that dinner of Emerson's at the Tremont. He was a man perhaps not of the highest genius but full of that originality

[1] Writing in March, 1860, to Norton, Clough says of his "Plutarch," — helpfully read by Norton in manuscript and proofs: "I have read the critique on Plutarch pretty carefully since I wrote to you, and find it very satisfactory. I half-regret your having taken so much trouble and pains as you appear to have done. The early lives are certainly very faulty. I did not feel as if it was done rightly till I was doing Otho and Galba. The life which was most mine is that of Demetrius, which is really *almost* mine. Dion, however, is just about an average specimen."

in combining and creating which forms so large an element in what we mean by genius. These writings of his look rude, unfinished, but vigorous, fresh and full of his own nature, unfinished like Michel Angelo's Brutus, not from deficiency, but from excess of power. But the best thing about him was his liberal, unjealous, generous heart. He was never scrimping or narrow in his praise of men whose reputations as artists were growing while his own was rather falling from its height. Powers and he at Florence lived together on the kindliest terms, and this was all to Greenough's credit.

Last week came your second letter (I forget its date and it is now at Newport) written two or three days before you went to office. I hope the cares and duties of your station do not sit heavy, and are not altogether tedious. What a magnificent address yours is now, "Council Office, Whitehall"!!! Why, one would have put the same address on a letter to Cardinal Wolsey. It was one of the most interesting places to me in London, — Whitehall, — so much history has been acted in and about it, and so much gossip of kings and their ministers and mistresses, their gaieties and distresses belongs to it. . . . Child has gone off to Lenox to spend a week or more. I have not seen him yet to propose to him to look over the sheets of the "Plutarch," — but I know that he will be as glad to do it as I shall. So give yourself no trouble about that except to write distinctly. As for the "plunder," I don't wonder that you give it that name if you fancied that either Child or I would rob you of the least

share of what you get for the work. My dear fellow, looking over the proofs will be a pleasure to us, not a trouble, — but I would not look over one if I did not do it simply and purely for the sake of having your book as perfect as might be. So no more of that. . . .

To A. H. Clough

NEWPORT, September 17, 1853.

. . . During the last month the decline in my Father's health has been very rapid. . . . The end cannot be far off,[1] — it will come as a blessing to him, — and if to him then also to us. My Father's state through this time of increased illness has been one of the most entire peacefulness, serenity, patience, and gentleness. He recognized long since that his death must be near and he has looked forward with desire to the moment when it should come. His strength of faith has been entirely unbroken, — uninterrupted even for a moment. His chamber has been as tranquil and as happy as any room where illness was could be. There has been no gloom over the house, — and there is no bitterness in the sadness with which we part from him. Death could not approach accompanied with more alleviations for its sorrow, and bringing more blessings with its grief. It has seemed a special mercy of Providence that just at this time a new object of affection should be given to my Mother in my sister's little boy. There is something very tender and touching in this connection of a new life on earth with the one just passing away.

[1] Andrews Norton died September 18, 1853.

You, much as you saw of us, my dear Clough, can hardly estimate and understand the happiness of the home that we have had, and the unbroken union of affection that there has been among us as long as I can remember. My earliest recollections are of my Father's interest in all that concerned me, of his telling me stories, of his walking with me, of his waiting for me to come home from school to take me with him to drive, — and ever since he has been not only the best of counsellors but the most loving of friends. His loss is irreparable to us all, — but his presence will be with us till we meet again.

To A. H. Clough

NEWPORT, October 14, 1853.

. . . Not much has happened since I wrote last to you. I was in town for a day last week, and found no changes since I was there last, — except a few new books at Little & Brown's. I had just been reading Mirabeau's Correspondence with the Comte de La Marck, — a book which places Mirabeau in a better light than any other I know, — and I was tempted to get a copy of his life that I saw in the bookshop, which had once belonged to Louis Philippe and bearing the stamp of the Bibliothèque du Roi. This is almost my only acquisition since you went off, save some books about India. It is pity that Carlyle did not have Comte de la Marck's book to use for his narrative of Mirabeau. There is far more of humanity in M.'s character as it appears in these letters and is described in the introduction to them, than one gets the impres-

sion from the common accounts. In this book he appears as a man to be loved as well as admired and to deserve pity quite as much as he does blame. The account of his death is far more touching than that given by Cabanis. It was as his death approached that he gave up the dramatic style and came down to the simplest realities of thought and expression; Cabanis, however, who does not seem to have understood him, represents his death almost like that of a stage hero.

Speaking of Cabanis reminds me, by no very obvious connection of ideas, of Auguste Comte. Is Miss Martineau a disciple of his that she translates him? Is it possible for Harriet the prophetess of the No-God to derive illumination from any human source but herself? Do you suppose that this new school of inductive philosophy reasoning from "algebra to Atheism" will find any number of Mrs. ——'s of either sex in England to become its adherents? Comte's algebra was translated in this country two or three years ago, — it was not thought worth while, as we have no state church, to go farther in his course.

Do you remember the last day we dined at Longfellow's, that Hawthorne, under his breath and hoping no one else would hear, recommended to Mrs. Longfellow a little book called "Up-Country Letters," and that Emerson hearing the sound of the title chimed in with praise of the book? It is a charming little book — (I have lately been reading it.) It is full of pleasant descriptions of country life in its quietest course, — and there is much fanciful refined and delicate reflection and written reverie. Some passages are admir-

able, — and the whole book has a real genuine American character visible in it. If it should ever fall in your way you had better look at it.

The "North American" for October I have looked over. It has an able article on "Slavery," [1] — the best thing that has been written on the subject for some time, by a Mr. Fisher of Philadelphia. It has also an article that I wrote in the summer on "Canals of Irrigation in India."[2] You shall have a copy of this. . . .

To A. H. Clough

November 22, 1853.

I have been trying to remember on what day of this month a year ago we first met at Dr. Howe's office in Bromfield Street. I wonder whether you recollect that morning and that meeting as well as I do. How quickly the years go by! My twenty-sixth birthday has come and gone since I last wrote to you, and I have been hunting for gray hairs, — though, to tell the truth, I do not feel so old as perhaps I ought. Having done so little as yet, having before me so much to do, I have no right, indeed, to feel old. Is there any other country in which the days are so short, and the present so crowded as in this? Occupations of many kinds have left me little leisure during this last month, — arrears of business to be made up, new duties to be performed and fresh interests springing up every day. If you were here this winter you would find us living differently from the way in which you knew us. Every

[1] "Uncle Tom's Cabin: the Possible Amelioration of Slavery," by Sidney George Fisher.

[2] A review of the work of R. Baird Smith.

day I am off for town at half-past eight, — a long morning of business finished, I reach home in the afternoon, and at twilight we dine. The evenings are quiet and pleasant with reading aloud, or the visit of some familiar friend; it is then and on Sundays that we miss you.

The most important public event of the month has been the rejection by the people of the proposed new Constitution. The discussion of the merits of the new instrument showed many defects in it, many carelessnesses on the part of its authors, and many serious errors. There was no sufficient ground for a change in the fundamental law of the state. The evils of unequal representation, which were the chief evils complained of, can be corrected in a less violent manner, and will be corrected now by simpler processes. In our country it is most desirable to preserve as much as we can of what has gained the stamp and authority of age. The tendency is to believe in what is new and untried as better than what is old, and has been tested by long experience. Nor is this strange considering how successful many of our experiments have been, — but the danger is that we may be led by success into presumption. The rejection of the work of the constitutional Convention will prevent any further proposal for making a new Constitution for many years. The most objectionable feature in the proposal that has just been voted down was that of limiting the tenure of the judicial office to ten years. This would have been utterly bad, and even Dana who worked hard for the proposed Constitution tells me that he is

glad of its rejection on this ground, inasmuch as he now believes that all the changes he desires can be made in another way.[1]

In general politics there has been nothing of interest, save the report of the first proceedings of the Japan Expedition. Congress meets in two or three weeks, and we shall then have the President's message, concerning which there is some anxiety. Koszta[2] is coming in a vessel (it is said) from Smyrna to Boston. It is fortunate that he does not go to New York, for there they would be likely to make a political hero of him on his landing.

There are no new books. Child is hard at work on Spenser, preparing an edition for Little & Brown. He has got a copy of the first quarto, which is the basis of all later editions, to collate the text with, and I think will make a better edition of Spenser than any yet published. "Hypatia" is just reprinted, and so is Tom Taylor's life of poor Haydon. What a mistake the English are making in taking Haydon so much at his own estimate and blaming themselves, (with a self accusation which has a tone of self laudation in it) for not better appreciating "high art." Haydon's whole life was a mistake; he would have made a good backwoodsman, for his brawny arm which could not put

[1] In his diary on Nov. 20, 1853, R. H. Dana wrote: "On the whole, I do not find it easy to determine whether I am most pleased or disappointed with the result." See *Richard Henry Dana: A Biography*, by Charles Francis Adams, vol. i, 251.

[2] Martin Koszta, a Hungarian revolutionist, of declared intention to become an American citizen, whose seizure in Smyrna, first by Austrian then by American naval officers, nearly led to serious complications between Austria and the United States. See Rhodes's *History of the United States*, vol. i, pp. 416–419.

a delicate touch on canvas, would have hewn down a tree well, — while his morbid consciousness would have worked itself out in dealing with nature, and his intense spirit of determination would have borne him successfully through the hardships of a settler's life. . . .

Miss Bremer's American book [1] is a good deal read and a good deal laughed at. . . .

To A. H. Clough

Friday morning.

. . . Do not put off sending me the poems for a volume, but let them come now. It is better to have them printed for the autumn than to wait till a later time. And do not above all be too critical with them. The coals which may be dead to you will still have warmth and light for others. The ashes on the altar are seen only by the priest, while the worshippers afar off see only the glow and the ascending column of smoke. Send them to Lowell and me, and trust that our judgment of them will be better than yours. Give them in a parcel to Murray and let him forward them through Little & Brown to me. This, as I said before, is to be regarded as a *vermillion edict.*

Longfellow retains his place [in the College] till next summer. He will not go abroad this year, nor does he have any plan of going for the future, — but yet he may go by and bye. He is too happy and too simple to be hurt by any Belgravian flattery — or to desire it.

Emerson has been lecturing against slavery in New

[1] Frederika Bremer's *Homes of the New World*, in two volumes, translated by Mary Howitt, was published in New York, 1853.

York. His lecture was very earnest, and was heard with interest. I will send you a report of it. Lowell, whom I see often, talks of going abroad again in a year. His heart is full of grief that grows heavier with time, and he is very solitary,[1] — but he bears up against depression with a most manly courage, and to the world he seems little changed from what he was. . . .

Addio,

C. E. N.

To A. H. Clough

SHADY HILL, January 23, 1854.

I remember that I am to try to regain the loss of reputation for seriousness which my last letter occasioned, so that I will be very sober through the whole of this. Is it indeed a month since I last wrote to you? I can hardly believe it. Time drives faster this year than ever before, and if before long the break is not put on we shall be at the crossing of Middleage before we know it, and arrive at the flourishing settlement of Grayhairs, — that is if there should be anything left of it when we get there.

The very day, I think it was, after I wrote to you I saw a volume of poems lying on the counter at the bookstore, which had just been published by Ticknor & Co. It was called "Passion Flowers." I took it up, opened at "Rome," read six lines, four of which were

> "or a thought
> Of punctual Duty waiting at the door
> Of home, with weapon duly poised to slay
> Delight, ere it across the threshold bound."

[1] His wife had died October, 1853.

Ah, said I coldly to myself, there is but one person here to write such lines as that, and taking out my purse paid my seventy-five cents and took a long look that night, as any curious sight-seeing stranger or any cordal anatomist, into the inmost depths of Julia Howe's heart. And since then I have tried to send you the volume, which perhaps has already been sent by the authoress. You would like to see it. There is a good deal of poetry, and of feeling, and still more of chaotic thought and troubled sentiment in it. It is more interesting as a study of character than in any other way, — but after all I don't believe in it as a real, true, genuine thing in any way.

I have seen Arnold's volume, too, since I wrote. Fields thinks it would not do to reprint, and I believe he is right. The book is too chiselled and cold, too sculpturesque for our hot and hasty demands. Milton has not been read this last year in America half as much as Al. Smith,[1] and Milton has been read much more than Æschylus, notwithstanding Bohn has given a translation, for the benefit of the unlearned, of his plays.

"Tristram and Iseult" interests me more now than before. I do like, as you guessed, "The Chapel of Brou," part III. "Rustum and Sohrab" is better in Firdusi than in Arnold, at least it seems natural in the one and unnatural in the other. The learning in names

[1] A reminder of the great popularity of the *Poems* of Alexander Smith. Clough soon reviewed one of his volumes favourably in the *North American Review*. In this article he also reviewed *Empedocles on Etna* and *The Strayed Reveller*, and detected a higher value in these poems, signed merely "A," than in the works of Smith.

of rivers and mountains which the poet has never seen is tiresome in everybody but Milton, and in him only endurable because you feel sure that it was not got up for the sake of using it in verse, but was the result of long study with other objects in view. I object beside to the discordant imagery, — e.g., the scrub making the fire in the morning for her mistress; the gardener cutting hyacinths instead of grass with his scythe. I am ready to affirm that neither of these are appropriate in a Persian story, or fit illustrations where the "couleur locale" needs to be preserved.

31st January. This was to have gone last week, my dear Clough, but it missed the mail and has lain over till now, giving me a chance to tell you a week's later news. I tried this morning to find some one of the booksellers who was about to send a parcel to London that I might get a package into it for you, but I did not succeed; so that you must wait a fortnight longer for "Passion Flowers" and other green-house products.

I met Mrs. Howe at Longfellow's on Sunday. She begged me to tell you that she wanted a note from you about her book, and if need be she would send you a copy of the second edition which is just to appear. I told her I thought you would hardly write unless forced to by an *ex dono*. The book has gained her the éclat she wanted, and is a success externally.

The Monday night before last, I was at Longfellow's with Tom Appleton, Lowell, Curtis and Boucicault. Did you ever see this man who is the personification of his play — "London Assurance"? He is

lecturing about the country, — with very moderate success, and trying to *star* it as much as possible. He told us that night that three of his lectures on Society were "light, sketchy, physiological," while the fourth was "romantic, or so to speak, classic and statistical." He likewise informed us "that the novel was the episode of the drama, and the drama the episode of the novel," — that England had no drama, that the Anglo-Saxon mind had never produced a good play. "Not even Shakespeare?" queried Lowell, who grew indignant. "No, sir," replied the undaunted Dion, "not one of his plays but is beneath contempt as regards its form, and in form the merit of a drama for the stage always lies." Lowell asked no more questions. "I," said the Boucicault, "have in the last twelve years written 105 dramas, 17 of them in 5 acts, — and all have been upon the stage!"

Meanwhile Longfellow sat by with the blandest courtesy, and at length the whole affair assumed the aspect of a delightfully pleasant comedy acting out, there, for the benefit of the actors.

Curtis spent last Sunday with us. He has been lecturing from the Mississippi to the Penobscot this winter, and with great success. His "Potiphar Papers" were gathered into a volume for Christmas time, and 5000 copies have been already sold. In one of the late "Putnam's" was a charming piece in his best style, called "My Chateaux," — you should read it if you want to know how pleasant he is as a companion, for it reveals many of his most marked traits of character. He is lecturing about Boston this week

(that is, *around* in the towns near Boston, and not concerning Boston) and will be at Shady Hill again next Sunday.

The first proof of the recommenced "Plutarch" came to me on Saturday, — and there was but one word in your copy which gave me any puzzle. I think we shall get along with it very well. When I am away from Cambridge, Child will see to the proofs. I have told them not to print fast, and I do not believe that they will care to press it very much. You really have taken great pains with the copy and, skilled as I have become in your system of writing, I do not fear any difficulty.

Now that I am on the subject of your writing, I want to recur to what you apparently find a very disagreeable topic as you never mention it or take any note in your letters of what I say about it in mine, — and that is, — the printing of a volume of your poems here. I seriously want you to send me out some of those poems which you have written, the best of them, and enough to make up a volume, and let me see to getting them published here. I do not promise you a success like A'x Smith's, — nor would you desire it on the same terms, but I do promise you a warm and hearty reception, and welcome for your volume among those who remember you and truly love Poetry. Do put a package of your verse in Chapman's hands for me, — even if you do not want it published. Send it to me and trust to my discretion in the matter, — send it to me if for no other reason than to give me pleasure. You can't refuse this? . . .

I do not like to begin on politics so near the end of my letter, for this last month has been a marked one in their course. The Slavery question is up again, and threatens to be as violently discussed, and to be the occasion of as much excitement as ever. I will send you a paper which will explain to you what the Missouri Compromise is which Mr. Douglas, the Senator from Illinois, a candidate for the Presidency, and Chairman of the Committee on Territories in the Senate, proposes to annul in his bill admitting Nebraska as a state. Nebraska lies west of Missouri, between it and the Rocky Mountains, and was acquired by the United States by purchase from France many years ago. The gist of the question is, Shall slavery, which has not been known in Nebraska the territory, be permitted in Nebraska the state? Mr. Douglas, seeking favour from the South, hoping, and unprincipled, proposes to permit it. The Administration, afraid of the South and full of Presidency seekers, declares itself in favour of Mr. Douglas's bill. The North, demoralized on the whole subject of slavery by Mr. Webster's influence and the Compromise of 1850, hardly knows now how to act. It is, however, I believe beginning to see that this will never do, and public spirit is rising against this outrageous and disgraceful attempt. A part of the South have foresight enough to see that if the Missouri Compromise is broken down, that of 1850 may likewise in fit time be broken and not to their advantage, — a part of the South also is opposed to the spread of Slavery as you or I are. I cannot believe that Douglas's bill will

pass, though I fear that it may. If it does I believe that this bloody invention will return to plague the inventor; — that this will [be] the last and the fatal step of the Slave power in this country, — for the actual power is in the hands of the North, and such a step will teach the people that it is time to use it. . . .

To A. H. Clough

March 16, 1854.

. . . The Nebraska iniquity has been consummated as far as the Senate goes. The bill is not yet before the House, and its fate there is most uncertain. I believe there is some reason to hope it may be defeated. The feeling concerning it is very strong throughout the North and North West; it is less general but still very deep in the Middle and Western States. New Hampshire, the President's own State and the most wedded of all the Northern States to the Democratic party, has just been lost in an election by the Democrats; a thing almost unknown before, and affording a strong proof of the force of public opinion in the State against this bill. Of the speeches made in the Senate I recommend you to read Seward's and Sumner's. Seward's is the ablest that has been made. He is one of the most prominent and powerful of the present party leaders, and is likely to be the candidate of the Northern party at the next Presidential election. Everett's course has been pitiably timid and time-serving, and his political career may be considered as finished, — he wanted the Presidency and misses it by trying too hard for it. "He has n't got backbone enough to be

sexton of a church" was a judgment pronounced on him by one of the "people" in an omnibus the other day.

The Administration have got a very pretty quarrel with Cuba, and will make the most of it. One of the New York steamers has been confiscated in Havana owing to informality in her manifest. The accounts as yet are all from one side and we have not heard the Spanish version of the story. But we do not care to wait for that and propose to seek redress whether Spanish laws are violated or not. Such an opportunity as this cannot be lost.[1] So the President sends an undignified message to Congress, and all the passion that can be excited is being stimulated by every proper means. The "Black Warrior" is an ominous name. In the existing state of feeling in this country in regard to Cuba it was, so far as can be now seen, an immense mistake on the part of the Spanish authorities to commit such an inflammatory act as the seizure of this vessel. . . .

To A. H. Clough

May 2, 1854.

I ought to be doing other things than writing to you this morning, — but, reversing the old rule, I will choose pleasure first and duty afterwards. Come va il mondo? It is a long time since I heard last from you, — but I have a hope that the "Pacific," which arrived yesterday at New York, may have brought me a letter.

[1] A foreshadowing of Norton's sentiments regarding relations with Spain and Cuba in 1898.

Lowell was with me last night till near one o'clock, — so that if I am stupid this morning there is no cause for wonder; — he was very bright and pleasant and we should neither of us be dull to-day, could we have sat talking all night and not gone to bed at all. My affection and admiration for him quicken every time I see him; he bears the trial of his life, a loss which grows only more palpable in the course of time, with the best spirit, and the truest right feeling. Sometimes, after he has been long at home, surrounded only by those things which suggest continually to him his sorrow, I have found him very sad; but he quickly rallies, and no word of unmanliness or complaint ever shows that he has lost even for a moment the serenity and patience of his heart. His little Mabel gives him constant occupation and happiness. There is something older than her age in her, and the tenderness with which she seems to love her father is more that of a companion than of a child. He is full of plans for literary work as usual; — a story, a comedy, a book on Italy, a new volume of poems, all lie in expectation before him, together with a thousand other projects less definite than these. This month's "Putnam" has the concluding part of his "Cambridge 30 years since"; it is written in his best humour, and has much fine character drawing. This "Putnam" too has your "Peschiera," — and as you know how much I liked it, I will only say that it is as good in print as it was in MS. You have sent the poems for the volume before this, I hope. If you do not see "Putnam," write to me that I may send it to you.

Emerson read a lecture on "Poetry" the other afternoon in one of the rooms at Divinity Hall. As Longfellow and Lowell were both there, he was under some constraint and read very badly, skipping some pointed criticisms on the general character of American poetry, — at least so Lowell thought.

There is no political news. The Nebraska Bill is virtually defeated, and cannot now be carried except by some unexpected coup-de-main, or some unlooked-for treachery. It has been a severe blow against slavery, — and the North is more united on the ground of the non-extension of slave territory than it ever was before. I do not look forward with satisfaction, however, to the prospect before us. Such abortive schemes as this has proved excite bitterness of feeling on both sides, which will need but little more excitement to deepen into positive ill-will. I know no more dangerous point for political parties to be divided upon, than one which like this of slavery is concerned with morality even more than with policy. Political disputes then take the tone of moral controversy, and the "I am holier than thou" cry excites the worst passions. . . .

To A. H. Clough

May 30, 1854.

. . . This will come to you just on the eve of your marriage. I wish you joy most heartily, and I wish that I could speak these wishes to you instead of writing them. Will you ask Miss Smith, or Mrs. Clough, as it may be, to count us all among those friends who send her at this time the most cordial and kindly

greetings and regards? Jane and Grace have been trying to persuade me since your letter came to take passage in the steamer for the sake of being at your wedding, and come back on the next after it from Liverpool, — and there is the only hindrance of impossibility to leave what must be done here; — my will and my desire both fall in with their persuasion. I hope that the spring is as beautiful in England as it is here, and that the 13th of June will be the brightest and most blooming of all summer days. . . .

And I now hardly know whether to write on another sheet and tell you of the gloomiest times that I ever remember for the country, and especially for Boston. You can scarcely care much to hear of them now, but you can throw my letter aside to be read as a piece of history at some future indefinite period.

You will have seen in the papers that the Nebraska Bill, to the surprise of almost the whole country, was brought up by its friends in the House, and after discussion was passed by a vote of 113 to 100, — not a Northern Whig voting for it, and but eight or ten Southern men voting against it. From the moment that it was taken up it was obvious that a change had taken place since it was last before the House a month earlier, — and that the favourers of the bill were the strongest party. Still it was difficult to believe that such an outrageous violation of public faith, in support of which no argument that would stand could be adduced, would be forced through by executive influence uniting with excited pro-slavery feeling. Bribery of one kind or another was used to determine the votes of those

who wavered, and after a long discussion in which the minority acquitted themselves with true spirit and ability, a majority was found willing to vote that by the word "forever" in a solemn, public, national contract, was meant *thirty-four years*.

The indignation is very strong at the North, and almost universal, — and there had been no time for recovery from the shock and surprise that such an act had produced, when last week a fugitive slave was seized in Boston. I will not enter into the details of the case, for I really have no more time for writing, but will send you a paper in which you will find a full account. Since the Revolution there has been no such excitement in Boston, and for these last three days it has been almost from hour to hour uncertain whether the love of order or the love of liberty would prevail. Had not the troops (citizen soldiery) been under arms in great force there would have been a mob and a riot of the most passionate kind. Even now, if the Commissioner determines that the slave must go back to slavery, I do not think that he can be carried back without bloodshed. It is a time of painful suspense, and of painful conflict of opinion and duties. No man is quite clear that he sees what is right to be done. I believe that the law standing on the Statute Book must be carried out now, but only because I believe that violence in resisting it would render it more difficult of final repeal. We must get rid of it somehow or other. Everybody regrets that the slave was not rescued last Friday night[1] when an attempt was made

[1] The Anthony Burns riot occurred May 26, 1854.

before the military were called out. But no more now. You shall hear the sequel.

Once again let me give you best wishes. God bless you.

Your affectionate

CHARLES E. NORTON.

To A. H. Clough

NEWPORT, 7 July, 1854.

... On the 13th of June the Longfellows, Felton, Child, Lawrence (your English Lawrence, the painter) and one or two other friends of ours were at Shady Hill in the evening, and we celebrated together your wedding day, whether the 13th or 20th we did not then know, and joined together in the wish that its silver and its golden anniversaries might come around to you in all happiness. Lowell would have been with us too to complete the circle of your special Cambridge friends, but that that week he was not well, and was saddened by memories which the season brought back to him. He joined with us, however, in heart in all good wishes.

Lawrence came on from New York where he has been ever since first arriving in the country, to take a portrait of Longfellow which is to be engraved in London. He was most successful in catching a most admirable likeness, far better than any previous one that has been taken of the Master of Craigie House. It is full of life, natural, easy, animated, and thoroughly characteristic. He stayed for nearly a fortnight in Cambridge occupied with this, and with a likeness of Lowell, which, though not quite so first rate (justice can hardly be done to Lowell without colours) as that

of Longfellow, was still very excellent. We all liked Lawrence much, — he is quite a loveable man, of quick and sympathetic perceptions, of delicate observation and feeling, clear-minded, thoughtful, cultivated, and amiable. He spent most of his time at Craigie House, and Elmwood, and Shady Hill, so that in the ten days which he passed at Cambridge we got to know him quite well. He is soon coming to spend a month at Newport, and proposes to go in October to Boston and to stay there for some time. At the same time that he was in Cambridge Curtis, the Howadji, was there staying with us and with the Longfellows, so that [there was] more variety than usual among our guests. It is a pity you did not know Curtis, — though I am not sure that you would have taken to him. But you could not have helped liking the sweetness of his disposition, his genial temperament, and his unfailing pleasant spirits. He has resisted more flattery before thirty years old than comes to most men in the course of a very long life, and he is, I believe, likely to improve and write better things than he has yet written. There is a pleasing, fanciful article of his in the July "Putnam," "Sea from Shore," which is worth your reading as showing some of his most agreeable qualities of style and character. Longfellow too has a striking poem in the same magazine [1] with more force and condensation of thought in some of the verses than common, and showing all his usual mastery of rhythm.

We came to Newport early last week, just in time to

[1] "The Jewish Cemetery at Newport."

escape terribly severe heats. . . . I am able to be here but little at present; business keeps me somewhat steadily in Boston, and proof sheets force me to stay in Cambridge. By the way just before we came to Newport I transferred the charge of the "Plutarch" proofs to Frank Palfrey,[1] — for as I should be away part of the summer from Cambridge I could not attend to them always with sufficient regularity, and Child was really too busy with his poets to take them. Palfrey will, I think, do them well; he is a good scholar and not unused to literary work. . . .

The Ticknors have gone to Lake George to pass the summer. Lowell has gone with his little Mabel to Beverly on our eastern shore. The Longfellows soon leave Cambridge for Nahant. Felton is writing an oration to be delivered before the Alumni at Cambridge on the 20th. Julia Howe is coming to live at Newport, — where the air may restore her withering Passion Flowers. Is there any one else of whom you want to hear? . . .

I have not said a word about public affairs, — for they are in too disheartening a state to make it pleasant to write of them. I should have to write too much. The slave *was* carried back from Boston, — but only by such military force as made our streets on that day look like those of Naples or St. Petersburg. It was worse than a foreign despotism. How all this slavery is to end I can not see. It is easy to see that it will not end without much trouble. . . .

[1] Francis Winthrop Palfrey, then a young lawyer in Boston, afterwards Colonel of the 20th Mass. Vol. Infantry. A son of the historian, John Gotham Palfrey.

To A. H. Clough

BOSTON, 16 October, 1854.

... Thank you very much for the Scaliger that belonged to Johnson. You must have remembered my taste for books that have once belonged to men who have written good books themselves. My collection of this sort contains none, however, that I shall value more than this, with its double association. Does not Johnson say something about Scaliger or quote from him in his great Preface? I have an idea that he does, and I will look to see....

You ask me for a little political news, — which is hard to give in these times. There is one great fact, indeed, which seems clear in the midst of the general confusion, — that the separation of the North and the South on the question of slavery is becoming wider day by day, — and that no bridge can be built over the chasm, and that no Curtius can by any self-sacrificing leap cause the gulf to close. Meanwhile what will come about in the natural course of events no one can pretend to foresee. The prospect seems to be that Nebraska and Kansas will both come in as free states, — for the tide of free emigration is far more rapid than that from the slave states. The power of the North is certainly fast increasing, and if it can be properly brought to bear the limits of slavery are fixed, — but Cuba, Mexico, and Hayti will all add their elements of discord to the struggle of the next ten or twenty years. The end may be disunion.

But to come from speculations to facts. The Admin-

istration is now, to use the popular phrase, nowhere. The elections in Pennsylvania and Ohio, two of the most important states politically, have just taken place and have resulted in the utter rout of the Administration party. Such a defeat as it has met with in these states is a sure prelude to a similar defeat in New York. The Nebraska Bill is condemned at the polls, and it is by no means improbable that there may be a majority of members in the House of Representatives at the next session who will insist on the repeal of the clause repealing the Missouri Compromise. These checks on the Administration are to be specially rejoiced at, as likely to prevent it from attempting any rash and uncertain course in foreign affairs.

As to the Know-Nothings, it is very hard to tell of how much consequence their organization is. The secrecy under which its proceedings are veiled has the effect of bewildering politicians, and leading to an exaggerated estimate of its extent and power. The objects which it professes to aim at are threefold — to render naturalization less easy, to exclude foreign-born citizens from office, and to deprive Catholics of public trusts, or perhaps, in more general terms, to check the growing political influence of the Catholic Church. All these, if not carried too far, are legitimate and desirable objects of political action. The Know-Nothings press them so far that, in my belief, they weaken their own strength. The fact, too, of secrecy is one which will tend to render their association short-lived. It is now like the lighting of a fire among dead leaves, which burns very brightly but soon burns out.

The party is now controlling many of the state and town elections; it may do good in breaking up more completely the old worn out political combinations, — but it can not become a great permanent party itself. Its secret counsels will be soon directed by designing schemers for their own ends, its more honest members will become disgusted and break away from it, and in a short time it will fall into insignificance, having fulfilled its end in concentrating public attention upon the aims which it has held up. Such at least is my belief, — if the means of political action adopted by the Know-Nothings were as open and excellent as the objects they profess it might be different, — but secrecy is a better cloak for bad means and bad ends than for good ones.

There is great need, as you know, of the adoption of some means to reduce the political power of foreigners in our cities. Being poor for the most part they are easily bribed, being ignorant they are easily prejudiced and deceived. They have no political education, and understand nothing of the rights and duties of citizenship. Politicians who want votes are afraid to offend them, and if anything is to be done toward rendering it more difficult for them to gain political power it must come from a widespread popular movement, of which Know-Nothingism is perhaps the beginning. Boston has reduced the strength of her foreign population indirectly by very recently annexing Charlestown, and bringing the two cities under one civic government. The proportion of native Americans to foreigners is much greater in Charlestown than in Boston. . . .

To A. H. Clough

SHADY HILL, February 4, 1855.

. . . My friend George Curtis is spending two or three days with us, and yesterday and to-day he has been rewriting a lecture that he has been delivering over the country from the Connecticut to the Mississippi during the last two or three months. He rewrites it to make it more perfect for delivery in Boston to-morrow evening. There is hardly another lecturer so popular throughout the country as he. His quick fancy, his grace and ease of expression, his shrewd good-natured satire, and his appreciation of the good and beautiful things of life, together with the richness of his voice, and the gentlemanly earnestness and sincerity of his manner all unite to make his lectures not merely entertaining, but such as cannot but touch the hearts of his audience with elevating and enlarging influences.

Friday, 9th February. A most magnificent, blockading, old-fashioned snowstorm gives me a chance to finish my letter, my dear Clough.

Curtis's lecture on Monday night was as excellent as I wrote you on the last page. He had an audience of two or three thousand people, and pleased them all. His subject was "Success," — false and true success; that no earthly standard would measure a true success, and that all prosperity and fame and worldly splendour might be but the accompaniments of a failure in attaining the real objects of life. A common moral enough, but so earnestly enforced and so strikingly illustrated that it gained a new force. A man who goes from town

to town and city to city with such a protest against a prevailing and fatal error may be considered as one of the best of modern missionaries.

I hope you have got the reports of Lowell's lectures. . . . Just now, to be sure, he is a little run down with overwork, for he has written a great part of the course while delivering it. . . . But the best news about him is still a secret here. Longfellow's place has been offered to him, and I think that there is no doubt that he will accept it. He will have no duties of instruction, but will have only to deliver a course of lectures during the year, and to exercise a general supervision over the Department of Modern Languages. Before entering the Professorship he will most likely go abroad for a year to study in Germany. I have not seen him since Monday night, and then his decision and his plans were not quite made up, but I think you will see him for a day or two at least in London before the summer is over. How we shall miss him! and how I should like to go with him! . . .

You ask who Parsons [1] is. Do you not remember a translation of ten cantos of the Inferno which I one day showed you in my room? It was by him and was all that he had printed before this new volume. He is a dentist by profession (whence he learned the use of the file, and of compression and various other of the secrets of poetry), he is most retiring and modest in his life, — and known well only to a few. I like him much and have known him a long while, though I see him but seldom. . . .

[1] Dr. Thomas William Parsons, 1819–1892.

To A. H. Clough

BOSTON, February 8, 1855.

. . . A new Senator has just been elected from Massachusetts, Mr. Henry Wilson, — a man who has few qualifications for the place, an intriguer and with no commanding ability. His chief merit is a stiff backbone as regards Slavery, — but on this point there is no hope of any chance of satisfactory action. The question of the introduction of slavery into Kansas is still unsettled, but great efforts are making to pour such numbers of emigrants from the free states into this territory as to determine the character of its institutions in favour of freedom, — and I think with a fair hope of a successful result. It is virtually agreed that Nebraska must be free. Nothing can be done at present in regard to the Fugitive Slave Law. Sooner or later it must be repealed, — but years must pass first, and years of painful excitement and conflict. Meanwhile propositions are openly made at the South for the reopening of the Slave trade. The prospect of a change of Southern sentiment is almost hopeless as long as slavery continues to be so profitable pecuniarily as at present. If the value of cotton and sugar could be reduced we should soon find Southerners ready to recognize the need of freedom. Meanwhile darkness, darkness, darkness, — but we will not despair, — for behind the clouds shines the same light which shone round the angels when they sang Peace on earth, good will to man. . . .

In the spring of 1855 Norton and his sister Jane paid a visit to their Newport friends, the Middletons, in South Carolina. The following passage from a letter to Professor Child gives some of the first impressions of a region and social conditions quite new to Norton.

To F. J. Child

CHARLESTON, March 15, 1855.

MY DEAREST FRANK, . . . The change to a Northerner in coming South is always a great one when he steps over the boundary of the free states, and the farther you go towards the South the more absolutely do shiftlessness and careless indifference take the place of energy and active precaution and skilful arrangement. Dr. Adams[1] made no new discovery when he found that the outside first aspect of slavery has nothing horrible and repulsive in it. The slaves do not go about looking unhappy, and are with difficulty, I fancy, persuaded to feel so. Whips and chains, oaths and brutality, are as common, for all that one sees, in the free as the slave states. We have come thus far, and might have gone ten times as far, I dare say, without seeing the first sign of Negro misery, or white tyranny. Women, to be sure, are working in the fields, — I have seen them doing the same thing in India, and in Germany, and dragging carts in Carinthia. But what are horrid, and not to be exaggerated in the most vivid description, are the indirect symptoms of the curse and blight of slavery, in the condition of the whites. One feels it always and sees it often, — it is a

[1] Nehemiah Adams, author of *A South Side View of Slavery*.

parallel condition to the indescribable restlessness of disposition that one finds under a despotism; but here it is the uneasiness of the ruler and not of the ruled that is so manifest. The miasma that broods over Carolina in the summer seems to me but the emblem of the invisible, unrecognized, blindly guessed at moral miasma that rests over the lands where slavery exists. If I ever write against slavery, it shall be on the ground not of its being bad for the blacks, but of its being deadly to the whites. The effect on thought, on character, on aim in life, on hope, is, even in this five days' experience of mine, plainly as sad as anything can be, — and among the women not less than the men. . . .

To A. H. Clough

EDISTO ISLAND, SOUTH CAROLINA, April 5, 1855.

. . . Jane and I have been passing a fortnight in Charleston, and we have had there as pleasant a time as could be. We have been staying with our friends the Middletons, and experiencing all the grace and kindness of Southern hospitality. I often thought of you and of the years you spent in Charleston, and wondered how distinct your recollections of the city were. I fancy it has not changed much since you were there, — a new cathedral not very beautiful, a new hotel, a few new houses have been built, but the general characteristic must remain much the same. The old church of St. Michael's, with its steeple so like that of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields, still stands at the corner opposite the Guard House, the chimes still ring out from the belfry every quarter of an hour, and in the night the

C. E. NORTON AND F. J. CHILD ABOUT 1854

watchman still calls from the tower to tell the people that all is well, as one hour after another goes by. It is the most picturesque American city that I have seen, — not from its natural situation, though that is pretty, but from the way in which it is built, the houses separate from each other and showing in their construction the individual peculiarities of their builders. You remember the wide piazzas, the flat roofs, the pretty gardens, with oranges and oleanders and camelias growing in them. And can you not recall the air of ancient elegance that invests some of the houses, and the look of decay which the climate has speedily given to others, — and the walk on the Battery with the pine-covered islands in the distance behind which the sun sets? We left the coldest and bleakest of Marches in Boston to find in Charleston the softest and loveliest beginnings of Spring. With the yellow jessamine flowering in golden sweetness and profusion along the roadsides and all through the woods, it was hard to fancy that at home, only four days off, were snow-storms and coal fires.

We are now seeing something of plantation life under its pleasantest aspect on a well managed plantation. I have seen nothing as yet to make me alter my opinions in regard to the blasting effects of slavery, — but much to make me feel a tender and compassionate sympathy for those owners of slaves, (and they are a large class) who feel the responsibilities and are bewildered by the perplexities of their position. There is no easy solution of difficulties for them. The hardest trials and the bitterest results of slavery as it exists

here are those which come to the whites not the blacks. But this is not a subject for a letter, unless I were to write you one far longer than this can be, — some time or other perhaps we will talk it over. . . .

There is no news to tell you from Shady Hill. I wrote you of Lowell's having the professorship; — he goes abroad in about a month, sailing direct for Havre, at least such was his plan when we left home. . . .

And writing to Lowell from the same surroundings, at once so charming and so saddening, Norton gives fuller expression to the thoughts awakened in him by the spectacle of slavery.

To J. R. Lowell

MIDWAY, EDISTO ISLAND.
Good Friday Night, April 6, 1855.

It is almost midnight, but I do not feel like going to bed, on the contrary I feel like writing to you. . . . Here it is perfect summer. I am writing by an open door that leads onto a piazza below which is a garden, while beyond the garden at the foot of a steep bank flows a beautiful little river from whose opposite side stretches a wide spread of marshes, bordered far off by tall pine woods whose outline is here and there broken by cultivated fields. The air is close and damp with low-lying clouds, and in the south now and then comes a bright gleam of lightning. There is scarcely a sound but the whistling of the frogs, — and as I write these words I hear the pattering of a soft rain.

This place is Mr. Middleton's cotton plantation, and

the island on which it is produces the finest cotton in the world, the long, silky Sea Island cotton which is used for only the most delicate stuffs. We are some thirty miles south of Charleston, and to the softness of the Southern climate is added the luxury of sea air. One might fancy it the genuine, original Lotus island, for it wooes one to voluptuous ease and indolence, and makes day-dreaming the natural condition of life.

Think of being woke up in the morning as I was yesterday and shall be to-morrow by the singing of mocking-birds on a tree that grows near my window. Such a flood of song as they pour out would drown the music of all the nightingales that ever sang on the Brenta. Their song is the true essence of all sweet summer sounds, so rich in melody, so various, so soft and delicate and then so loud and joyful that nothing more exquisite was ever heard even in the enchanted gardens of romance.

We are seeing plantation life to great advantage, — for this has the reputation of being one of the best managed plantations, and Mr. Middleton is a man of such kindness and liberality of heart that few better masters of slaves are to be found. But slavery in its mildest form is yet very sad, and it is on such a plantation where the slaves are all contented, and well cared for so far as their physical condition is concerned, where they are treated with the consideration due to human beings, so far as their relations to each other and to their master extend, that one feels most bitterly the inherent evils of the system, and recognizes most distinctly the perplexities that it involves, and the

responsibilities that it enforces. I have had much talk with all sorts of persons since being here, in regard to this subject. I have used the greatest freedom in expressing my own opinions, and it has been very pleasant to find that men were willing to discuss the subject fully and freely, and, however you might differ from them, without impatience or ill-feeling. It seems generally to be taken for granted that a great difference of opinion must exist, and that such difference is no ground for vexation. I confess that the result of these talks has been only to deepen the conviction that one of the worst effects of slavery is to deaden the moral feelings and to obscure the intellects of the masters. There are those, indeed, who escape this influence, but they are few.

It is a very strange thing to hear men of character and cultivation . . . expressing their belief in open fallacies and monstrous principles, and convincing themselves with utmost honesty of feeling that they really and truly do believe in these things. It seems to me sometimes as if only the women here read the New Testament, and as if the men regarded Christianity rather as a gentlemanly accomplishment than as anything more serious, — as if they felt confident that they had secured seats in the coupé of the diligence that runs to the next world, and had their passports properly viséd for St. Peter. It is very different with the women, —there are many who are as clear-sighted in regard to the wrong, and as devoted to the fulfillment of their duty in respect to it, as truly Christian women should be; — but they are bewildered often,

and their efforts are limited by weakness, inexperience, and opposition. Their eyes fill with tears when you talk with them about it, while the men often look at you with a certain scornful pity for having yielded to the prevailing sentimentality of the day so far as to believe slavery anything but a blessing.

For my part I see no remedy but the gradual and slow progress of the true spirit of Christianity, bringing together black and white, quickening common sympathies, and by degrees elevating both classes, the one from the ignorance and brutality in which it is now sunk, the other from the indifference and the blindness of mind in which it rests content. But this is a work of ages. I am losing all confidence (if I ever had any) in the idea that any immediate, compulsory measures would improve the condition of either masters or slaves.

I ought to have written you a different letter from this, and told you more of what we are seeing and enjoying. We are really having a delightful time. . . .

Ever gratefully and affectionately yours,

C. E. N.

To A. H. Clough

SHADY HILL, May 7, 1855.

. . . At last I am going to do what you have so often and so kindly proposed to me, — to introduce to you one of our friends who is going to spend this summer in England. I shall give him a short formal note of introduction to you, but will tell you here who and what he is. His name is Field, Mr. John W. Field of Philadelphia. He is a man of forty years old, who

having made fortune enough for his own and his wife's (they have no children) moderate wants, is now leading a life of complete leisure. He is one of the frankest, most honest, open-hearted men I ever knew. Lowell wrote an impromptu epigram upon him one day as follows, —

> "Few gifts to please me more can nature yield
> Than such a fresh and sunny broad-viewed Field."

He has "a talent for friendship," — with a cordial, sympathetic manner which is the real expression of his feeling. He has more love for literature and art than cultivation, — and he appreciates everything much more through his affection than through his intellect. His wife who accompanies him is a sweet, gentle, unassuming, over-sensitive, and slightly self-conscious, very feminine person. It is their plan to spend a few days, a week or two in London and then to go into the country. Do not take the trouble to pay them any formal attention, but pray go to see them if you are in town and let them feel that they have a friendly acquaintance in London. They sail from New York in the steamer of next week. . . .

To A. H. Clough

SHADY HILL, 10 June, 1855.

. . . Lowell told me just before he sailed that he had written to you to tell you of his plans. I wish you might meet him in Paris. He actually left New York on the 4th, the vessel having been kept in port two or three days after her appointed time of sailing by contrary winds. A fortnight ago last Friday he had a charming

supper party at Elmwood for a circle of his friends. It was given in just the pleasantest way,—and you may imagine what a good time we all had from the lateness of the hour to which we stayed, — it was just upon two o'clock when Longfellow and I, who walked toward home together, parted at Craigie House gate. So pleasant had the party been that it was determined that we would meet once more all together before Lowell's departure, —and it was arranged that a dinner should be given to him at the Revere House on the evening before he was to leave Boston for New York, —Tuesday evening of week before last. It was a dangerous experiment, after such a supper to try to have another party equally pleasant,—but it was a successful one. . . . Longfellow was at the head of the table and Felton sat opposite to him. Lowell was at Longfellow's right hand and Emerson at his left, — and the rest of the party was made up of Holmes, and Tom Appleton, and Parsons, and Agassiz and Peirce, and eight or ten others, all clever men. Longfellow proposed Lowell's health in such a happy and appropriate way as to strike the true keynote of the feeling of the time. Then Holmes read a little poem of Farewell that he had written, and then after an interval filled up with conversation he produced two letters addressed to Lowell, one from the Rev. Homer Wilbur and the other from Hosea Biglow. They were very cleverly done, full of humour and fun,—and made great shouts of laughter, which continued all through the evening to roll up in great waves from the end of the table where Felton and the best laughers generally were seated. It

was really a delightful, genial, youthful time, and had Lowell only just come home instead of being just about to go off nothing would have been wanting. . . .

To A. H. Clough

SHADY HILL, August 20, 1855.

I was delighted to see your handwriting last week, — it was light to my eyes to behold a letter from you. It was so long since I had had one that I began to think our correspondence was such as Sydney Smith speaks of,— like small clothes before suspenders were invented, not to be kept up. I have been somewhat remiss, I confess, in not writing oftener of late, but I have as usual been much occupied, and for the last month or two have not been quite as well as usual, and so have excused myself from all enforced exertion.

I left Newport this afternoon and am spending a solitary evening in my room at home. It is now the College Vacation. . . . But at Newport we are having a fine time. The sea and the sky are splendid as ever, and friends as numerous and as pleasant. The Longfellows are there and make a most agreeable household with Tom Appleton, Curtis, and Kensett.[1] Longfellow is printing a new poem called "The Song of Hiawatha." He gave me the first half to read the other day. It is very different from anything he has ever done before and quite fresh and original. . . . No two poems could be more in contrast than this and "Maud." I quite agree with all that you say of this last. There are portions of it of most exquisite and touching beauty as it seems to me,

[1] John F. Kensett, 1818–1872, American painter of landscapes.

but as a whole it is a sad, morbid, painful picture of a man's mind.

I hope to have your volume printed this autumn. What do you say to having the Bothie reprinted in it, — and to giving to this a new name, making the title of the volume, — calling it simply, "A Long-Vacation Pastoral, and Other Poems, by A. H. C"? And will you have the Fuosich changed to Kippock?[1]

We have been reading Sydney Smith's Life with great pleasure. It is delightful to find that his wit and genius were so much less than his truth, uprightness, energy, and good sense, — and after having long admired, to learn to respect him still more. It shows how fine his life is that, spite of Lady Holland's treatment of it, it remains still so full of interest and impresses one so strongly. . . .

The slavery question becomes every day more absorbing, more exciting, and more threatening. There is every appearance of a more violent and heated storm approaching than any that has yet broken over our states and tested the strength of our Union. A Missouri mob rules for the present in Kansas under the name of its legislature, — and before the year is out we shall hear the smart crack of the rifle from the Kansas settler against the Missouri invader. No wise or thoughtful Southern man defends the course of these Missouri borderers, but wise and thoughtful men are quite as rare in the South, perhaps rarer than in the North. Meanwhile it is hard to possess one's soul in quietness. . . .

[1] Clough changed the title of his poem "The Bothie of Toper-na-Fuosich" to "The Bothie of Tober-na-Vuolich," not "Kippock."

To J. R. Lowell

September 23, 1855.

I had just begun my letter to you, my dear Lowell, when I was interrupted by Jane's calling upon me to go out with her, and as I left it unwillingly I said to Grace, "I wish you would sit down at my table and finish a letter which you will find lying upon it." This, as you see, she not unwillingly did, and had she not forgotten two or three things of which I meant to write to you, I would have signed my name and sent the letter last week.

Since she wrote our plans have greatly changed. Instead of my going abroad alone, we are all going together. This is delightful. It has long been one of my pleasant hopes that my Mother might at some time see Italy, and I am sure that nothing (so far as we can see) could be better for her than to have the change and added interests of life which some months in Europe will bring to her. We mean to sail on the 10th October, and our next fixed point is to be in Rome by the middle of December. There we shall spend the winter, and, as one of the greatest pleasures which the winter has in promise, I look forward to your coming and staying with us for as long as it is possible. It gives at once a new home feeling to the anticipation of being in Rome to think of seeing you there. When this reaches you, pray write to me, to the care of Baring Brothers, and tell me what your plans are, and how you are.

And now for other things. The summer has gone very quickly and very quietly, — the principal event

for us being the birth of a second son to my sister Louisa. Newport has displayed its usual charms, and never was fuller of the world, — but we have seen very little of the gay society. I have passed the summer in lounging and reading and writing. . . . In the course of July Stillman came from New York to make me a visit. He stayed two or three days and then was suddenly called away by the illness of a brother. I have heard often from him since, and have learned to know him very well. He interests me greatly. I have never known anyone more earnest and faithful in his desire and search for spiritual improvement. His character is one of very marked individuality. It is too intense, too self-introverted to be happy, and the circumstances of his life have been so sad as to make it one long suffering. He is not well, and the combination of ill-health with too much care and too hard work has made him low-spirited, and has put him out of heart so far as a man who has a sure, reliant trust in the goodness and constant love of God can be put out of heart. I long to do something to help him. I shall bring you some of his letters to see. They will interest you still more in him. He needs inspiriting, and I know nothing which would do him more good than to receive a letter from you. I hope you have already written to him; if not pray write to him soon. Meanwhile the "Crayon"[1] goes on well; every number has much that is excellent, but it is not yet paying for itself and it will come to the end of its first year with a large balance of loss against

[1] The first art magazine published in America, under the editorship of W. J. Stillman.

it. This I am very sorry for, — for it is the one periodical in our country whose failure would be cause for real regret. You will like to hear that I am to have the picture of Stillman's which pleased you, and which pleases me now as much as it did you when you first saw it in New York, and told me of it in the library at Shady Hill.

The summer is not the time for new pictures or new books, and there have been few of either in which you would have been much interested. Longfellow's new poem, the "Song of Hiawatha," will very soon appear. He gave me half of it to read a month or two ago. It is very different from anything that he has done before, and being wholly founded on our Indian legends is too remote from the interests of present life, and too distinct in the tone of sentiment from that of our day, to give him full scope for the display of his finest and most peculiar poetic characteristics. It has a little the air of having been crammed for, and written not from the fulness of the heart but the fulness of the head. Still there is much in it that is very charming, — it is fresh, simple, free from conceits and prettinesses, and the octosyllabic blank verse in which it is written is exquisitely modulated, and managed with all the melodious skill with which Longfellow always controls the metres that he uses.

Hiawatha is the hero of the story, which is in part purely mythical in its character, in part simply descriptive of Indian life in the forest. He is one of the heroes, half human, half divine, of the ancient times, and the story of his deeds is told by the poet to the later

generations. He is the fighter with the winds, the conqueror of the maize, the redresser of wrongs and the deliverer of his people. But perhaps my criticism on this poem is wrong. It is at any rate imperfect, as I have seen, as I said, only the first half, and Longfellow tells me that the part I have not seen is better than that which I have. . . .

A new book called "Leaves of Grass" has just come out which is worth knowing about. It is a quarto volume of unmetrical poetry, and its author according to his own account, is "Walt Whitman, one of the roughs, a kosmos." It is a book which has excited Emerson's enthusiasm. He has written a letter to this "one of the roughs" which I have seen, expressing the warmest admiration and encouragement. It is no wonder that he likes it, for Walt Whitman has read the "Dial" and "Nature," and combines the characteristics of a Concord philosopher with those of a New York fireman. There is little original thought but much original expression in it. There are some passages of most vigorous and vivid writing, some superbly graphic description, great stretches of imagination, — and then passages of intolerable coarseness, — not gross and licentious, but simply disgustingly coarse. The book is such, indeed, that one cannot leave it about for chance readers, and would be sorry to know that any woman had looked into it past the title-page. I have got a copy for you, for there are things in it that you will admire, and it is worth having merely as a literary curiosity, for the external appearance of it, the covers, the portrait, the print, are as odd as the inside. . . .

CHAPTER IV

ENGLAND AND ITALY

(1855–1857)

THOUGH the division of Norton's days between Cambridge and Newport, the Boston counting-house and his study, afforded a variety of congenial employments in the years that followed his return from India, the energy and industry with which he applied himself to all his undertakings told upon his strength, always somewhat limited, and two years after the death of his father it was manifest that a term of travel and holiday ordered by the doctors would be desirable. In October, 1855, with his mother and two sisters, he therefore sailed from Boston for Liverpool.

In a brief notebook record of this time he wrote, "Tom Appleton joined us in the autumn in England, and a more agreeable companion than he was one could not find. After a few months in England, we crossed to the Continent, and from Paris, after hiring a travelling carriage, we drove through France to Marseilles: then on by the Corniche road and Riviera from Marseilles to Genoa, and from Genoa to Leghorn. A more delightful form of travel there is none than that we adopted, the well-built carriage, with the four good horses and the driver, making the pleasantest sort of conveyance. The railroad along the Mediterranean had not yet spoiled the way. Although the American

MRS. ANDREWS NORTON

invasion of Europe had begun, it had not reached its later devastating proportions, and a good part of France and Italy were still unaffected by it. We spent the winter of 1855–56 in Rome and of that winter such record as is worth preserving is in my book, 'Notes of Travel and Study in Italy.'" Travelling northward in the spring after a few weeks spent in Sicily, it was in Switzerland that Norton, his mother, and sisters fell in with Ruskin, whom he had met in London in the preceding autumn.[1]

Lovers and readers of Ruskin will remember the chapter of "Præterita" beginning with the sentence "The meeting at St. Martin's with Norton and his family was a very happy one," and continuing with an account of the walk taken by Ruskin and Norton at five in the morning, "as the roselight flushed the highest snow, up the winding path among the mountain meadows of Sallenches." Ruskin in "Præterita" fancifully calls Norton his "first real tutor," but Norton had found in his early reading of "Modern Painters" the clue and key to much of that æsthetic enjoyment and interest which was to become of such vital import in the shaping of his character and life. Their reciprocal debt, to which affection was added, drew from each the best that he had to give.

Many phases of the friendship which grew out of this meeting in the summer of 1856 are recorded in

[1] Many years afterwards — in 1874 — Norton wrote to Ruskin: "It was in May or June (1850) that I saw you for the first time, at a party at the Proctors'. We did not know each other, but I looked with due awe at you. I never thought I should live to chaff you and to love you as I do."

Ruskin's account of their meeting on the Lake of Geneva is found in *Præterita*, III, 2 and 3. See Appendix A.

Ruskin's letters to Norton which Norton published in 1894. The greater number of his own letters to Ruskin he destroyed when, in 1900, he went to England on business connected with the literary executorship to which Ruskin had appointed him. But those which exist, and some of Norton's letters to other correspondents about Ruskin, yield a vivid impression of the relation between the two men.

There was another friendship which had recently grown to intimacy. The foregoing letters to Clough show that in 1854 Norton and Lowell were much together. Not long before the first meeting with Ruskin, Norton wrote in one of his notebooks of what was "the most important element in my life on leaving home —the beginning of my friendship with James Lowell."

To Lowell, Norton wrote in later years: "If you see to the inscription over my grave, you need only say, 'He had good friends, whom he loved.'" At an earlier day Lowell had written to Norton: "It is almost my happiest thought that with all the drawbacks of temperament (of which no one is more conscious than myself) I have never lost a friend. For I would rather be loved than anything else in this world." The touches of sentiment through the long and abundant correspondence between Lowell and Norton, one side of which has already been given to the public in the "Letters of James Russell Lowell," edited by Norton, are highly characteristic of the two men, and reveal an affectionate relation maintained without interruption through more than forty years.

Inheriting many things in common from their New

England forbears, they both possessed, though in highly differentiated forms, a gift, endearing them to many friends and to each other, of frank expression of warm feeling, almost exotic in the sons of sturdy Puritan Divines. But for Lowell and Norton — the younger of the two — there were other bonds of intimate association: a Cambridge boyhood with the same background of learning and simple dignity that dwelt in such places as Elmwood and Shady Hill; a love of letters born of such surroundings; an enthusiasm for liberal and enlightened movements in political, social, and intellectual life; a joint participation in editorial labors — first on the new "Atlantic," with Lowell as editor and Norton as one of the earliest contributors, then as fellow-editors of the older "North American Review"; and a parallel experience as professors at Harvard. When Lowell went out into the larger world as a public servant, Norton, at Cambridge, remained a confidant and counsellor in all that concerned the truest service of their country and the higher civilization which both the friends held dearly at heart.

With such reasons for intimacy it is natural that in any record of Norton's life his letters to Lowell should bear an uncommon significance.

To J. R. Lowell

PARIS, HOTEL WINDSOR, RUE DE RIVOLI
Friday, 9 November, 1855.

. . . We had a very pleasant fortnight in London, seeing old and new friends. I wrote you what a charming person Clough's wife was, and how happy he

seemed. He does not like his work much, but with such a wife, and with a home of his own, life runs more easily with him than ever before. We saw much of them, and spent one rainy day at her father's pretty place near Richmond Park.

Last Friday I spent the afternoon with Ruskin at his house on Denmark Hill, and had a most interesting time seeing his Turners and hearing a lecture from him upon them, not delivered *ex cathedrâ*, but in the most agreeable, unpretending, and kindly way. It was the good talk of a first-rate critic about the pictures which of all others he knew and loved best. His collection includes the best water-colours of Turner I have ever seen, specimens of his three distinct styles. I do not know how many he has, but he showed me at least twenty, and I think there are several among them that I would rather have than any other landscapes in the world. It was especially interesting to see even in the very earliest works, where the signs of immaturity were most evident and where one could see the presence of traditional influences and conventional expressions, — the manifest sign of genius. It was genius in fetters, but with one hand unchained already. And it was wonderful to mark the progress from freedom to freedom till at last the deliverance was complete, and the genius stood face to face with Nature, delivering her messages to the world as she flooded his soul with her divine inspiration. You must go to see these pictures, — and if we can only be in London together next summer we will go together. I was specially pleased with Ruskin himself. There was no pretence

nor affectation about him,—no attempt to say anything striking, no claim to be listened to, but he had the pleasant ease of a well-bred gentleman. He said he was going to press with the third volume of "Modern Painters" at once. "We do not keep Guy Fawkes's day any longer," said he, "but I mean to have a little private celebration of it by sending my book to the press." "With the idea," said I, "of the explosion which will follow its appearance." "Yes," said he, "several people and several prejudices will be blown up, I trust, by it." . . .

To A. H. Clough.

CANNES, 28 November, 1855.

. . . We have spent a very pleasant four weeks since we left London, three of them in Paris, and the other on the road. Paris was very full and very brilliant. It has changed much within the last five years, and, beautiful as it has been, I confess I found something to regret in the destruction of some old historic localities, and some picturesque bits of dirty tumble-down streets. I missed the old Place du Carrousel,— with its one-story bird-fancier's and autograph collector's shops and all its little irregular houses standing under the sheltering wing of the Louvre, and face to face with the Tuilleries. It is now doubtless more splendid, and indeed I do not know a palace short of Delhi to compare in extent and general architectural effect with this one that has seen so many changes of occupants. The best thing we saw in Paris was perhaps a great fire which broke out one evening just after dark

in the "Manutention," or Military Store House for flour, on the Quai de Billy, within a hundred yards of the further end of the "Annexe," and quite near, as you see, to the Galerie des Beaux Arts. The clouds were thick and hung low so that the red light of the great conflagration was caught and reflected by them all over the city. We were about to go out to spend the evening at the house of a friend, and we drove first to see the fire from a near point of view. The Place de la Concorde and the whole line of the Champs Élysées were filled with people hurrying all one way, their faces reddened by the light, while the obelisk, the fountains, and the statues glowed almost as if they had just come from the furnace. We got close to the fire, saw the troops and the firemen hasten up, watched the soldiers chase after reluctant well-dressed citizens to press them into service, wondered how long it would take to put out the fire with inefficient buckets and barrels of water, and received a little pleasurable glow of national pride from the conviction that if we do have more fires in America than anywhere else, we also understand better the art of extinguishing them. Indeed the fire was quite worthy of New York, as Dickens[1] said to me, adding that he could say nothing higher in its praise.

The two Scheffers are, by the way, just painting portraits of Dickens; the one by Ary promises to be extremely good, — that by Henri was not advanced far enough for one to form a judgment of it when I saw

[1] In writing from Avignon the day before to T. G. Appleton, Norton spoke of meeting Dickens — "very pleasant" — at Ary Scheffer's.

it.... I saw the Brownings while we were in Paris. They were living in the St.-Germain quarter. She was quite ill with a cough, and Browning said they might at any time be off for the South, though they hoped to be able to spend the winter in the city. Pray write me about his new poems, which had not reached Paris. I want much to see them. And what is said of Longfellow's?

We spent last Sunday in Avignon. A charming old place, because it has not been improved since the bad times of the dark ages. The streets are just as narrow, crooked, steep and ill-paved as when Petrarch complained about them, — the wind whistles over the Place de Notre Dame just as it did then. The tower where Rienzi was confined is still used as a prison. The popes are gone, to be sure, but there is an archbishop to take their place. It shows how little hold the present has on the town that the only place which gave much sign of active life was a café, the proprietor of which had failed, where a sale of the effects was going on preparatory to its being closed....

To J. R. Lowell

CASA DIES, VIA GREGORIANA
13 January, 1856.

... Yes, this is Rome.... It is all and far more than I believed it, and yet far less too. I have never been in any place in which Nature seemed to show so kindly, constant, and loving a regard to the works of men, where she does so much to hide their defects, to soften down their harshnesses, and to unite them in one com-

bination of beauty with her own perfect self. But as for the priests, the princes and the churches — they are all alike, untouched by the sacred genius of the place. . . . I think Bernini and Borromini may be taken as the exponents of Roman taste and Roman feeling since Michel Angelo died. It is worse now than ever. The pope seems to like a gaudy show, and to see his name put about in all unfit places. He has been restoring many churches, but "restoration" seems to mean throughout Europe "destroying the original character."[1] Simplicity of taste and feeling are extinct, and art is dying out. The worship of the Virgin is taking the place more and more, since her Immaculate Conception was announced, of the worship of God, and men are going back to idols and images. I want to see another revolution, — and Rome may be battered down and depopulated if in that way we can get rid of these churches and these priests. I think I could roast a Franciscan with pleasure, and it would need only a tolerable opportunity to make me stab a Cardinal in the dark. . . .

In April of 1856 Lowell left his studies in Germany to join Norton, John W. Field and Charles C. Black, an English friend, in an expedition from Naples to Palermo, and thence, on mule-back, to Mount Etna.

[1] On a paper endorsed "Bill of expense for putting in order the grave of Keats. Rome, January, 1856," Norton wrote in 1891: "Keats's grave had been long left neglected when I had the stone firmly set, and some violets and myrtles planted around it. Could it have been left to Time and Nature to deal with it as they might it would have been better. But in such a burial-place as the Protestant Cemetery in Rome the air of neglect was inappropriate and unsuitable."

"We have come hither," Lowell wrote from Catania to W. W. Story on May 7, "from Palermo on mules, I believe about two hundred and odd miles; tremendous work, but worth doing at any cost and discomfort. Enough discomfort there is — such inns as it never entered into the heart of man to conceive; so nasty, so fleay, and all that. But one lives and likes it. I am staying at home to-day in the hope of accomplishing Etna to-night." [1] The four travellers kept a journal to which they contributed in turn. Norton appears in it as Don Carlos, Black as Nero, Field as Campo, and Lowell as the "Hospodar." It is a record of cheerful spirits and youth, and some of its livelier portions, such as Black's ingeniously rhymed account of the ascent of Etna, show traces of Lowell's companionship. The primitive conditions of those days make themselves felt in the good-humoured narrative of the five weeks' journey; but the interest and beauty of all the adventurers saw are as clearly there. At the end of May the friends separated, and three months later Norton was writing to the "Hospodar."

To J. R. Lowell

BONN, 4 August, 1856.

. . . I wrote you a most hurried note from Geneva which I hope you received in London. We were just then going to Chamouni. We returned to Geneva five days afterward, having had a superb view of Mont Blanc first in the clearest and most cloudless weather,

[1] *William Wetmore Story and his Friends*, by Henry James, vol. i, 322-23.

and then in mists and broken sunshine, and then almost hidden in clouds. At St. Martin on our return we met Ruskin whom we had seen once or twice before. I had lent him your poems at Geneva, and at St. Martin he told me that he had already sent to England to have them sent to him on the continent. He spoke about them as I liked to hear him, — and what was also pleasant he told me that for a great while the "Biglow Papers" had been one of his favourite books. I liked what I saw of him much, and for a day or two I saw a good deal of him, and had long talks with him. His manners are perfectly simple and free from affectation, and in conversation he has nothing of the overconfident and dogmatic tone which is so often shown in his books. He is quite as ready to listen as to talk, and there is a pleasant readiness of sympathy, and cordial readiness in his manner such as is rare to find in any Englishman. We took a long walk together on the mountains above Sallenches, and I was struck, as one would expect to be after reading his books, with the fineness and quickness of his powers of observation, and their great cultivation; but in general his talk was not so much that of a sound thinker, or of a clear-headed man with an equable temperament, as of a man sensitive to all external impressions, and likely to change, not his principles, but his judgments and his opinions according as one point of view or another came most distinctly before him. He is busy now in illustrating six of the old, characteristic Swiss towns, — a work which will take him two or three years to accomplish. . . .

To J. R. Lowell

SALISBURY, August 31, 1856.

It is not long since I last wrote to you from London, but so much has come and gone since then that you must be content to receive another letter from me at a less interval than usual. When we were in London, five or six days ago I went to see Sir James Clark, and he so decidedly advised my remaining abroad through another winter that, much as I had set my heart upon going home this autumn, I have determined to stay and spend another winter in Italy. My mother, Jane, and Grace will return in the steamer of the 11th October in which we had all hoped to go together. . . .

How often shall I recall in Italy the happy times we had together there this last winter! and how often shall I wish for you there again! I am sorry to be away from home for so long a time just now. I would like to see, if not take part in, the political revolution that is going on, — and it is rather hard to stand off and see others doing all the work in which one would be glad to have a share. I trust that by the time I get to be as old as you are (and that is putting off the accomplishment of my hope to a somewhat remote period) I may have learned the great lesson of patience; — as it is, I see so much to do that I am impatient to be about it. Still I am going to have a good time this winter. I go back to Rome as to a dear old friend; we have not got to get acquainted; no tedious preliminaries, no uncertainties; we know each others' hearts. I mean to study the language (and manners) of the Trasteverini, and put the

Professor of Modern Languages in Harvard University at his wit's ends to talk it on my return. I mean to go to Ravenna, to Ancona, to all named and unnamed places in Italy; to leave nothing that is worth seeing unseen, and if on my return I find that anybody has seen things in Italy that I have not, I shall be sure that they were not worth seeing. I mean to bring home several Giottos, and a copy of a fine bronze lamp that they have at Cortona. This last I mean for you, — for your study table. . . .

To A. H. Clough

DURHAM, 21 September, 1856.

The note that I found at Ambleside last Monday from you was very welcome. We were staying at the Low Wood Inn, and the next day Jane and I made a very pleasant visit on your mother and sister, who received us very kindly. Their home is in a most superb position, and the view from their windows is almost equal in beauty to that from Rydal Mount. I saw the Arnolds too on that day, and they also were very kind and pleasant; — what a homelike home theirs is! I was delighted to see so many little children. . . . Mat Arnold was quite different from my preconceived idea of him. His manner in conversation is quite of another sort from his manner of writing. From his talk I should not have taken him for a poet, but to be sure we did not then, nor the next day when he came with his wife and sister to see us, get much beyond the commonplaces of talk about America and England, Emerson's book and so on. . . .

The better I know England, the more beautiful and interesting I find it. What wonders of art and building have we not seen during these three weeks, — Winchester, Salisbury, Stonehenge, Wells, Chepstow Castle, Gloucester, Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon, Chester, Kendal, the Lakes, Durham, — are the great points, but the filling up between them is scarcely less fine. How much of Italy lies enclosed in these country-houses. What a Titian there is at Longford Castle, what portraits at Warwick! — the rooms seem to be full of the air of Venice, and when you look down on the river you might almost expect to see a gondola coming out from under the arches of the bridge.

I wonder if the English are quite worthy of the good things they have got, worthy in the mere lowest way of appreciation. The services in cathedrals suggest this doubt together with many others. . . .

Ever affectionately yours,

CHARLES E. N.

To A. H. Clough

OATLANDS PARK, WALTON-ON-THAMES
21 October, 1856.

You have been passing a pleasant fortnight, I trust, at the Isle of Wight. These last two or three days have had almost an Indian-summer beauty.

My Mother and sisters went off well and in good spirits. . . . After they left I spent a week in London and then came here to stay with the Storys [1] and Appleton. It is a charming place, with thoroughly English

[1] Mr. and Mrs. William Wetmore Story.

beauties. We are a quarter of a mile from the Sturgis's, — and with a large party of pleasant people staying there, the two households are constantly interchanging festivities, and entertainments. Thackeray came down yesterday with his two daughters for a three or four days' visit. His girls had never stayed at a country house before, and said they had read about country visits in novels and were delighted to find that there were such things in real life. But just before dinner he received a telegraphic message from Paris that his mother was very ill, — and that they must come to her. So the dresses had to be put back into the trunks, — and they all went back to London in the late evening train. This was a real vexation. Thackeray said he had begun his new novel [1] three times, and burnt all three beginnings. . . .

The first part of Froude's book,[2] which is all I have yet read, seems to me very clever, but not of the highest ability. The abundant inconclusiveness and paradoxes are entertaining, and force one to think out his own opinions with distinctness, and it is good to have old facts set in new lights. Carlyle, I hear, speaks with uncommon praise of Emerson's book.[3] Thackeray and Browning agree with you that Emerson finds too little fault.

Pray give my kindest regards to your wife, and believe me

Ever affectionately Yours,

C. E. N.

[1] *The Virginians.*

[2] The first two volumes of Froude's *History of England* appeared in 1856.

[3] Emerson published *English Traits* in 1856.

To J. R. Lowell

SHANKLIN, ISLE OF WIGHT, 9th November.

The Isle of Wight is to the rest of England, my dear Lowell, what Newport is to New England. It is England made more beautiful by soft, southern airs. . . . I came here yesterday to spend a day or two with Mrs. Cleveland, and from here I shall go over to Paris. . . .

London has been very dull of late. Half the world, the best half, is still out of town, and the other half are gloomily laying in their stock of coals and getting out their winter garments, and putting down thick carpets, and preparing for the dirty black months. We had a fog there one day last week that was of a sort to keep up the old reputation of this portion of the British Constitution. Old men who had gone down to the city every day of their lives, got lost in the Strand, found themselves near Westminster Hall when they thought they were approaching Temple Bar. The robbers could not find the marks that Ali Baba had chalked up on the doors. Cabmen could not find the Bank, and Sir James Clark, who was to have gone to an important consultation, struggled vainly for three hours and then had to feel his way home. Even the blind beggars could not see approaching passengers, and had the fog lasted two days longer half London would have been starved. But fine weather set in the next day with a heavy rain.

Last Tuesday night I went to St. Martin's Hall to hear Mr. Ernest Jones [1] deliver an address to the lower classes. I wanted to see the Revolutionists, and to hear

[1] By 1856 Chartism had merged into the general democratic movement, in which John Ernest Jones remained one of the most conspicuous figures.

what the Chartist orator had to say. The hall was full of a dirty and ill-looking audience; there were some of the burly brutal pot-house and gin-palace set, some of the thin, sickly excitable workmen, with pale wives in tawdry dresses. It was rather a sad sight, for the crowd itself was a worse crowd in look than it would be possible to collect out of one of the great English cities, and its appearance was a bitterer denunciation of the social system than anything which Mr. E. Jones or any other ranting orator could utter against it. I paid 2/6 for a reserved seat. My companions in these seats were very few in number, and mostly of a sort from whom one would not fear much in a revolution. Mr. Jones himself is a man of perhaps forty years old, of a slight figure, round head, light hair and eyes, and the air of a man who is well contented with himself, and who likes to be looked at and applauded. And the applause which he received was very hearty and general. The performances commenced with music, a stout old man at a piano, and some "ladies and gentlemen" to sing. The songs were of a good stimulating sort, and each was vociferously cheered. We had received at the door a printed sheet containing two songs by Mr. Jones, and after several pieces had been performed, a short little man with very splay feet came forward on the platform and said, "The next harticle in our programme, Ladies and gentlemen, is the Hode by Mr. Ernest Jones," which amidst universal applause he commenced singing with a tenor voice which gave out on occasion of every high note, particularly when he came to the emphatic refrain, —

"Sharpen the sickle, the fields are white;
'T is the time of the harvest at last.
Reapers be up with the morning light,
Ere the blush of its youth be past."

Then we had a song by a lady, of which I remember only two lines; it was a song of a lover who said of his mistress that

"Her breath was sweet and mellow
Like balm of summer skies"!

Then Mr. Jones began his address. It was quite *ad captandum*, but not so forcible and pointed as it might have been, — it was a general attack upon the aristocracy. Whenever he raised his voice to a good tone of eloquence he was sure to catch applause, — and whenever he made a really good hit, which he did now and then, it was some time before he could go on, so continuous was the stamping and clapping of hands. It was mostly made up of declamation and sweeping assertions, — was not seditious nor provoking to revolt, but would leave indefinite sense of wrong, and would stir up vague ill-feeling and discontent. "I intend," said he, "in my next address to convict the episcopacy and the clergy of England of positive and deliberate perjury, fraud, and malice." This is an un-English style of attack, and I was sorry to hear even such an audience as this receive it with cheers. . . .

In December of 1856, Norton, still far from strong, returned to Rome to spend the winter there. It was a winter filled with study and social interests of a sort much to his taste. In a small notebook kept at the

time there are entries of the words, "Vita Nuova," and references to translations, that point to the beginnings of that devotion to Dante which continued through life. Already "The Crayon," Stillman's magazine, had printed, in the course of 1856, some of the "Notes of Travel and Study in Italy" to be included later in Norton's volume bearing that title. Through this second winter in Rome he added to the knowledge and appreciation which went to the final making of the book. A letter to T. G. Appleton, in January of 1857, tells him of some of the pleasures he is missing: "How many friends would cordially welcome you, the Fields, the Storys, Wild and myself; how many agreeable new acquaintances you would make, from Akers, whose works are at last getting him just fame and bringing him fortune, to Aubrey de Vere, the mild poet and gentle, enthusiastic convert."

Mrs. Gaskell and her daughters, the eldest a girl of about twenty, were also spending part of the winter in Rome, and Norton saw them constantly. The relations thus established ripened, through the delightful Roman hours, into a close and lasting friendship, of which there is a record in Mrs. Gaskell's dedication of "Sylvia's Lovers" in the first American edition of that story:[1] . . . Norton had met Mrs. Gaskell in London

[1] This Book is Dedicated
To all
My Northern Friends
With the truest sympathy of an
English Woman; and in an especial
manner to my dear Friend
Charles Eliot Norton
And to his Wife
Who, though personally unknown to me, is yet dear to me for his sake.

in 1850; had recalled himself to her in 1855 by the present of three posthumous volumes by his father, whose last pleasure in books had come from listening to the reading aloud of "Cranford;" and in 1857 they met again at the Storys', in Rome. Miss Gaskell in a letter to one of Norton's daughters[1] has described the meeting and its happy consequences:—

"We reached Rome late at night on February 23, 1857, and drove through the dark strange streets to the Casa Cabrale, where the Storys were living, who had so kindly invited us [to visit them]. Next morning it was all brilliant sunshine and colour and wild gaiety. We were taken down by the Storys to a balcony in the Corso, from which we were to see the great day of the Carnival — Shrove Tuesday. The narrow street was filled with a boisterous crowd of Romans, half mad with excitement at the confetti-throwing and horse-racing. Suddenly against this turbulent background there stood out the figure of a young man just below the balcony, smiling up at my mother, whom he knew he was to see there, and whom he easily distinguished from the others. It is fifty-three years since that day, and yet even now I can vividly recall the sweet, welcoming expression on the radiant face. He was brought on to the balcony, but how little he and my mother thought, as they greeted one another, that until her death they were to be most true and intimate friends. During the seven weeks that we were in Rome, we saw him constantly. He came to the famous breakfasts at the Casa Cabrale,

[1] Norton's second daughter was named for Mrs. Gaskell.

where Manning and Aubrey de Vere were nearly always to be found. Every time he came he brought a beautiful bouquet of flowers, with the true American generosity and courtesy. He constantly joined us in our sight-seeing, and we learned from him, more vividly than any book on art could teach, all the deep principles of painting and sculpture."

When in April the Gaskells left Rome, Norton accompanied them to Florence and Venice, where he shared Mrs. Gaskell's pleasure in the first printed copy of her "Life of Charlotte Brontë" that came into her hands.

Of other experiences of the winter there are glimpses in the following letters.

To A. H. Clough

ROME, 3, PIAZZA DI SPAGNA
18 December, 1856.

The arrival of your welcome letter to-day reminded me that I had been a fortnight in Rome and had not written to you. It was a rare piece of virtue in you to write first, and if you knew what a real, quick, warm pleasure it gave me to see your hand and to *hear* your words, for I always seem to hear rather than to read your letters, you must consider your virtue as fairly rewarded. Yes, I have been here a fortnight, — first having stayed a week in Paris chiefly for the sake of seeing my good old friend and tutor Torrey, who is now professor of history at Harvard, and who was laid up in Paris with a lame knee which threatened to keep him on the bed or the sofa all winter, —

and then having been detained for more than a week at Marseilles by such a storm on the Mediterranean as does not often rage on the Atlantic. And what a hideous place Marseilles is; it is not a city, but an exaggerated dock with a dirty suburb attached to it. Over a fountain where the women wash their clothes, in one of the back steep streets, the Marseillaises have put up a column with a bust of Homer upon it, and have inscribed on the base, *Les Descendants des Phocéens à Homère.* What a calumny on the Phocæans!—

But at last I reached Italy, — and the drive from Civita Vecchia to Rome was the opening of the long chapter of Italian delights. I doubt if a traveller coming for the first time to Italy would care much for this drive; but the day was perfect, the atmosphere was full of the warm south, the smooth sea lazily broke its blue into white, along the black rocks, or reflected the old watch-towers that stood lonely on the jutting points. The Alban Hills, raised from the earth by a low mist over the Campagna, looking like the great shadow of a wave rolling inland, and in the still farther distance were the Sabine Mountains white and glittering with snow. You remember the old desolate ruin of a castle that forms the village of Palo, and how there, leaving the sea, you turn inland over the wide stretches of the Campagna to Rome. Can you not see the shepherds leaning on their long staffs, the wooden plough, the white cattle, the grey mud-covered buffaloes, the jingling wine-cart, — and the dome of St. Peter's just as you reach the eleventh milestone from Rome?

This is the same dirty old place — damp, mouldy, sunny and delightful — that it ever was. I have rooms where the sun (when it shines, which for the last week it has done for only a few minutes) lies all day. Thorwaldsen once lived in them. I do not like the Piazza, but I could not find any other where the sun was so secure.

We have had a great day here to-day, for we have got up the column in honour of the Immaculate Conception, on its pedestal in front of the Propaganda. Since Fontana put up the obelisk in the Square of St. Peter's there has been no such undertaking here; the column is of cipollino, a beautiful piece of marble, once a part of some ancient ruin, but for hundreds of years it has been lying on the Quirinal. It is said that the Pope, tired of seeing it lie there, established the dogma of the Immaculate Conception in order to make use of the column. There was little ceremony to-day, but the raising was a great and ingenious work, and perfectly successful. The Pope was not present, and I hear that his presence was feared on account of his evil eye. He is a known gettatore. Queen Christina looked on from the Spanish Palace, and did no harm. There is no likelihood of trouble here this winter; the people, to be sure, are very poor, but also very broken up. They hate this column on which money is wasted while they starve; how much more the Cardinals and the priests. . . . I have forgotten to say that I am much stronger than when I left England, — having made a real gain I think. . . .

To J. R. Lowell

ROME, 8, PIAZZA DI SPAGNA
New Year's day, or rather night, 1857.

. . . The Fields are living on the corner of the Piazza Mignanelli and the Piazza di Spagna; and are just undergoing a tremendous bombardment from a strong force of Catholic converts who are trying to compel them to yield to the claims of the true Church. Aubrey de Vere, with whom Field fell in on his way to Rome, leads on the attack. . . . He is followed by a Right Honourable Maunsell, Clerk of the Ordnance, a good, stout, awkward Englishman, who brings up heavy batteries which he does not understand how to manage. And behind him comes a vigorous, simple, Jesuitical German Baron, Schroeder, who skirmishes in the most independent and original manner, watches every opportunity, seizes the least symptom of giving out, and spreads before the eyes of the besieged the great map of the Church militant in the background. To complete the conquest the Reverend General Dr. Manning has been brought on to the field, and a novena is going on for the conversion of our friends. But as yet they are not reduced to extremities, and they will hold out some time longer. But the attempt, which was amusing at first, is becoming tiresome. One cannot go to their rooms of an evening without finding them already invested by the converts. De Vere comes in to take a cup of tea and to sweeten it with poetic theology. There is a splendid presumptuousness on the part of these new Catholics; they fancy

that there is no truth but theirs, and that the Almighty looks with compassion, which they benignantly try to imitate, on the lost sheep who are not in the fold of Romanism. Then comes Maunsell to talk about Montalembert and modern miracles. Then the Baron to assure his friends that he feels to them like a Father, to tell them of his adventures and good deeds in America and Africa and of the conversions that are going on; and to say that he has an inmost feeling that his dear frens will become Catolik. Dr. Manning is reserved for solemn occasions; and if he fails (but how many converts has he not made and received!) there is a Bishop in reserve. It is a thoroughly amusing scene. Mrs. Field is becoming indignant that these men should suppose that she has been without religion so long, — Field smiles and says, "But now, Baron, I don't care one jot about your Apostolic succession, I don't know anything about such matters, but what I do know is that your Popes are not much like the Apostles." And after the Baron and the rest have gone he takes his New Testament and finds confirmation for his opinion. Meanwhile many conversions are going on as usual, especially among the English, and the Church is growing stronger every day throughout Europe. There is a great wave of superstition passing over the Continent, — a secular reaction, — and we have no reformers to breast it.

There is no change in Italian politics; the people are oppressed, restless, divided, and impotent. Here at Rome there is more splendour and pomp and more poverty than usual. The poor who cannot get work

are driven to rob, and even within the walls nightly robberies are common. A man comes up to you in the street and asks you for a light for a cigar and while you offer it to him, he puts a stiletto against your breast and demands your money; if any one passes he gently pricks you and talks of some common matter. When you have given him your watch or your money he goes off thanking you. But every day that I am here I love Rome more and more, and it becomes more and more a part of myself. There is no people so delightful as this, and no city where nature holds her rights so firmly and asserts them so clearly, spite of Berninis and Borrominis, of priests and forestieri. . . .

I am very glad to hear that you are writing a lecture upon Dante. I have got some good books on him since being here, and shall bring home all I can find. I am amusing myself with making a translation of the "Vita Nuova." The more familiar I become with it, the more lovely does it seem to me, and the fuller of an exquisite spirit of tenderness, grace, and simplicity. One can hardly appreciate rightly the "Divina Commedia" without knowing this first.

I trust you keep well and that work does not come hard to you. Do get ready a volume of the poetry that is scattered through the papers and magazines and lying in your portfolio, for the press. And if you will not do it as a duty to the world, do it out of love to some few friends and to me. . . .

In Norton's letters to his mother, full of the details of his daily life, there are constant references to Mrs. Gaskell. He speaks of her "uncommon

sweetness of voice and animation of expression"; again, "she is a wonderful story-teller, never exaggerating and always dramatic"; and gradually there shapes itself from the general correspondence an impression of what the acquaintance and growing intimacy with Mrs. Gaskell meant to Norton in the course of this winter filled with interests and pleasures.

To Mrs. Andrews Norton

ROME, 1 March, 1857.

. . . I was again this afternoon at the Villa Cælimontana[1] where I spent a quiet and delightful hour, and gathered the violets which stand on the table before me, and whose perfume fills the air of the room. They were growing in heaps and clusters on all the banks and under all the trees, and the spring was present not only in their colour and perfume, but also in the yellow of the daffodils, in the buds of the chestnuts, and in the damp unfolding leaves of the acanthus. A freshly ploughed field was scattered over with bits of broken pottery and marble, and I picked up a bit of red-veined marble that lay close to a clump of violets. This hillside is more beautiful now than when it was covered with the splendid villas and stately gardens of the Romans. The Juno looked superb to-day under her soft and equally diffused light. Whoever planned and built this villa and arranged the grounds must have been a person of uncommon feeling and taste. I looked to-day more carefully than ever before at the recent inscriptions which are to be found here and

[1] Now the Villa Mattei.

there, set in the old walls. Most of them are in Russian text, but some are in French, and are suggestive of unknown stories and unwritten poems. One of them upon a low wall, so hidden by the acanthus leaves and so defaced by mould and decay that I could not make out all the words, but still enough to come to the meaning, ran thus in French: "I sat upon her knees, I brushed away the white hair from her forehead, but she was so changed I did not recognize her who had nursed me." This was the whole. Upon the last arch of the broken Aqueduct is a little slab of white marble set in the well-laid bricks, on which are two inscriptions: "Le reflet de ton image est gravé dans mon âme," and "Chante, chante toujours. Ta vie n'est elle pas un hymne?" And on the arch under which a step is arranged for seeing the view, there is another bit of marble covered with an Arabesque relief and the words, "Redde Diana diem." Bring back, O Diana, the day....

To Mrs. Andrews Norton

ROME, Sunday, 15 March.

... This morning I did not go as usual to breakfast with the Storys; but I had promised to come up in the course of the forenoon, and when I arrived at their apartment, I found them all sitting on the loggia, and Mrs. Stowe telling stories of an old black woman named Sojourner Truth. The old woman was the original from whom "Milly" was drawn, and, according to Mrs. Stowe, an original of finer and of stronger make than the copy. Many of these stories were strik-

ing and touching, and Mrs. Stowe told them extremely well. The old Negro woman was full of that realizing faith in the presence of God and the immediate help of the Saviour which is characteristic of the religion of many of the blacks. She had the fine, rich colouring of the Negro imagination, she saw visions, and she had a strong and simple way of expression which gave value to all that she said. . . .

The American Eagle is ruffled here a good deal by Mrs. Stowe's presence, and our worthy friends the ———'s with their Southern proclivities, and many other people, find Roman skies less blue for sheltering her, and give occasion to regret that a woman who has so discredited her country should not remain at home. This would be an amusing folly, if it were not too common.

To A. H. Clough

3, Piazza di Spagna, Rome
April 4, 1857.

. . . The days here have gone so quietly with me of late that I have not kept account of their going, and am now surprised to find myself almost at the end of the fourth month in Rome, and already thinking of turning northwards, and, as I hope, homewards. I shall leave Rome in the course of ten days, — and after passing through Florence and spending a week or two in Venice, shall travel toward England, where I hope to be soon after the first of June.

Holy Week begins to-morrow, and Rome is already overcrowded with pilgrims, some of them for faith,

more for curiosity, — and already in a bustle with preparations for masses, and misereres, washing of feet, fireworks and illuminations. To-morrow those who go to the magnificent theatre of St. Peter's, where miracle plays are got up in the most splendid style, may see, beside the Pope, King Max of Bavaria, the Grand Duchess Olga of Russia, and a throng of other royal and noble personages. Queen Christina has been here all winter, but she has not turned saint yet, and her canonization is not yet determined upon. The two new Austrian Cardinals will appear; and France and England will be left in the background. Are they not the allies of stiff-necked rebellious Sardinia? Is not England still estranged from the bosom of her yearning Mother the Church? Is not the young Austrian Emperor the best beloved and most faithful son of Rome? The Austrian influence is much in the ascendant just now, — the Papal Government draws away from France, and Italy lies under the chains of the three allies, Austria, the Pope, and King Ferdinand. As for popular discontent there is more than enough of it, — but discontent breeds only bitterness, not courage, and popular ill-feeling will not take the place of public spirit. I see no single bond of union among men here; each man lives for himself, and is afraid of his neighbour. The Papal authority is strong, and has gained politically and morally as well as spiritually in its control over men's minds during the last few years. The Pope is in vigorous health, and the sincerest of churchmen, and, while he governs the Church, Antonelli is dictator in state affairs. He can smile, and smile, —

and if half what is said against him be true, he is a villain. . . .

Meanwhile there are plenty of fresh converts from England, with spiritual throats with a capacity to swallow anything that is offered them. Yesterday a young English girl took the veil, and the good, amiable, enthusiastic de Vere speaks of the scene as one of the most joyful he ever witnessed. He has just finished composing one hundred pages of poetry in honour of the Virgin. Dr. Manning is here, a wily and soft dialectician, an ascetic by nature, to whom morals are subordinate to religion, who will lie for the sake of salvation, and would cheat a soul into Paradise if he could not get it in honestly. He preaches now and then, and in the intervals devotes himself to converting. He is called the Apostle to the Genteels. The last sermon of his of which I heard was on Poverty, that of the world and that of the spirit. "Did I desire," said he, "to bring up instances of true poverty of spirit to your remembrance, I would point you to the lives of the Popes from St. Peter to him who now sits in St. Peter's chair."

The more I see of Catholicism at the head, the more evil do its results seem to me, the more corrupt its principles. But in the midst of corruption there is certainly some true growth of purity, charity, and holiness of life, so hard is it to crush good out of the souls of good men; and so easy is it to get some good results from appeals to enthusiasm and the imagination in the name of religion.

The pleasantest incident of the winter to me (setting

aside what belongs to Rome specially and by itself) has been the becoming acquainted with Mrs. Gaskell, who has been staying here for the last month. She is a very charming person, with all the qualities of heart that are best, — such a person as her "Cranford" and the best things in her other books would lead one to hope and expect she would be. But you know her. . . .

As the flowery spring days advanced there were expeditions, with English and American friends, to Veii, "truly Etruscan in character," to Frascati, Hadrian's villa, to St. Alessandro in the Campagna, all so well known to other travellers that the mention of their names is enough to suggest the enchantments Norton found in them. When he had left these scenes behind him, he wrote to his mother: "Germany is dull in comparison with Italy. It is the brewery against the vineyard. I am a little disenchanted to-night even with Nuremberg." But before reaching Germany, he had journeyed northward with Mrs. Gaskell and her party.

On April 16th he writes in his notebook: —

(From Ronciglione through Viterbo to San Lorenzo Miovo.)

Mrs. Gaskell read to me the letter Mr. Brontë wrote to her on receiving the volumes of her memoir of his daughter. It was a fine, strong, strange letter, quite characteristic of him. "Though past eighty years old and unfit for the task I would have undertaken to write the memoir of my dear daughter's life, if you had not

acceded to my request to do it. You were the fittest person, and you have done the work in such a way as no person but you could have done it." He speaks of the mingled pain and pleasure he had had in reading it, — not a word of what Mrs. G. had said in it of himself, — he speaks of the portraitures of his dear wife and children being most exact, and finds in the whole course of the work but one or two unimportant errors which may be easily corrected in a later edition.

Viterbo, — wonderfully picturesque, — fountains, roofs, pavement, church fronts, pulpit outside the church, sarcophagus, — and picture of the Saviour lying at the feet of the Virgin by Sebastian del Piombo, the finest of his I know, — full of deep colour, and the composition far more simple and powerful than was usual with him. The body of the Saviour lies extended on the ground, — behind it sits his mother, looking toward heaven, — no other figures, a bare stretch of land, a dark twilight sky. . . .

In a letter from Florence on the 22nd of April he writes: "I went with Mrs. Gaskell this morning to see the Brownings, — but they could not receive us; Mrs. Browning was in great grief, having just heard of the death of her father. I suppose she has not seen him for years, and never has gained his forgiveness. . . . We are off early to-morrow morning and shall try to post through to Bologna in one day. My next letter will be from dear Venice."

The letters from Venice are full of Norton's growing

interest in pictures and architecture: "and there," he says, "we found a copy of the Tauchnitz reprint of 'The Life of Charlotte Brontë.' It had just arrived. It was the first copy of the printed book Mrs. Gaskell had seen, — for she left England before it was published there. She got it and gave it to me, — and then was eager I should read it at once, that we might talk about it."

The next day was spent in Torcello, where "Service was going on in the Cathedral, . . . and a little red-haired boy sat on the steps of the altar, like one of John Bologna's singing angels, chanting the responses as if he had long been used to doing so, and was rather tired of the work."

In Venice the Gaskells and Norton parted, he remaining to study pictures, they to travel homeward. From Verona three weeks later he summarizes in a long letter — again to his mother — his feeling about the masters whose work had been his study: "Giotto is as much before any other Italian painter in thought and feeling as Dante is before any other Italian poet"; — so the letters continue, full of all that Italy offers to the appreciative traveller.

Norton, having passed through the Tyrol, Bavaria, and Holland, was well on his way towards home, when news of the establishment of the "Atlantic Monthly," with Lowell as editor, reached him. His early identification with the magazine to which they both remained lifelong friends and contributors, is indicated in the letter which follows.

To J. R. Lowell

PARIS, HOTEL DE L'EMPIRE
June 20, 1857.

. . . I am glad to hear of the plan for the new magazine. Of course it will succeed with you as its editor, and with such liberal arrangements for its beginning. But such things are never permanent in our country. They burn brightly for a little while, and then burn out, — and some other light takes their place. It would be a great thing for us if any undertaking of this kind could live long enough to get affections and associations connected with it, whose steady glow should take the place of, and more than supply, the shine of novelty, and the dazzle of a first go-off. I wish we had a Sylvanus Urban a hundred and fifty years old. I wish, indeed, we had anything so old in America; I would give a thousand of our new lamps for the one old, battered, but true magical light. Like Aladdin's maid (was it his maid?) we do not know the value of the old. — I will do all I can for you, and will write the article you want about the Catacombs,[1] but not till I come home, which will be, I hope, in less than two months. How glad I shall be to be at home, and to see you once more!

I was just writing to Mrs. Gaskell when your letter came, and I told her of the plan for the magazine, and of your suggestion that she should write for it. You said nothing about terms, except that contributors

[1] A series of articles by Norton on this subject appeared in the early issues of the "Atlantic Monthly."

would be paid well; so I took the responsibility of telling her that if she would write a story in two or three numbers she should receive for it at least half as much again as she is paid for what she writes for the "Household Words," and should have the same rights of reprinting, etc. . . . I dare say I shall hear from her about it in a day or two, — if not I shall see her at Manchester before long, and will bring you or send you word about it.

Will you not write to Clough and ask him for contributions? He might like to write. I will try to get some new poetry from him. He ought not to give up poetry altogether, — though hard work and care may make it difficult; while a good and happy wife has cleared away from his heart many of the perplexities which found their expressions in verse.

When did I last write to you? Was it from Rome, — when the spring had filled the Campagna with larks and anemones, or was it later from Venice when summer was making the city glorious with sunshine? It was hard parting from Rome, and would have been much harder if I had not had the happiness of travelling with Mrs. Gaskell. You have read the life of Miss Brontë, which is almost as much an exhibition of Mrs. Gaskell's character as of Miss Brontë's, — and you know what a lovely and admirable character she has. Seeing her as intimately as one sees a companion on a journey, I learned every day to feel towards her a deeper affection and respect. She is like the best things in her books; full of generous and tender sympathies, of thoughtful kindness, of pleasant humour, of quick

appreciation, of utmost simplicity and truthfulness, and uniting with peculiar delicacy and retirement, a strength of principle and purpose and straightforwardness of action, such as few women possess. I know no biography that has so deep and touching an interest as this of Miss Brontë, — none other written so tenderly, sympathetically and faithfully. I have seen no notice of it as yet that seems to me to do it the least justice, — the reviews are cold and unappreciative. But it is a book that will be read with tears, and make those who read it better and stronger, and readier to bear the trials of life, — a hundred years hence, as it is read now. . . .

A few passages from Norton's letters written in England before taking ship to America will complete the story of these two years in Europe.

To Mrs. Andrews Norton

OXFORD, STAR INN, 2 July, 1857.

. . . During my short stay in London, I saw but few people. Clough I saw every day, and on Saturday I dined with him and his wife. We had a pleasant little party there at dinner, with nobody of much consequence, but after dinner two or three people came in, among whom were Mr. Coventry Patmore and "the angel in the house." I was glad to see them both. His face and figure answer well to his poems, — slight, delicate, refined, and sensitive. He has the look and bearing of a gentleman, and talks easily and pleasantly. He introduced me to his wife, and with her I had but

five or six words of commonplace talk. She is not pretty, but she looks kindly and good, and I dare say is an angel to her husband. I did not see her wings, and perhaps she only wears them at home.

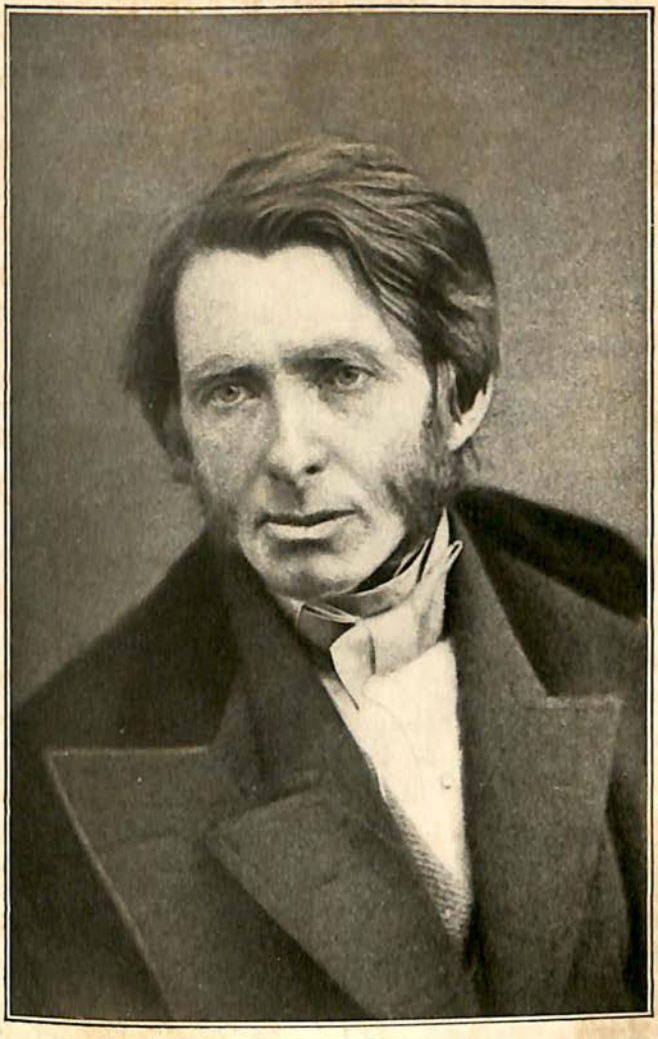
On Sunday I drove to Denmark Hill to see Ruskin, and had a most pleasant visit to him. His father and mother were kind as ever. Mrs. Ruskin showed me her flowers, and talked in her quaint, decided, moral way, so as to remind me more than once of our own dear Aunt Wigglesworth. She takes the greatest pride in "John," but she combats his opinions and lectures him publicly in a way which would be hard to bear, had he not a very sweet disposition and a most dutiful respect for her. She is a good old lady, who has lived in a narrow circle of strong interests all her life, has thought for herself in her narrow circle of thoughts, and does not know how large the world is, or how different other people are from herself. Ruskin is coming to Oxford this week, so that I hope to see him here, for he means to spend some days here preparing the lectures on "The Political Economy of Art" he is to deliver on the 10th and 13th of this month, at Manchester. He is indefatigable. Few men work so much and so satisfactorily, and if in working hastily he commits mistake, the great mass of what he does is done well, and few men ever work with a sincerer desire to do good by it. He is unspoiled both by praise and by abuse, of both of which he has received enough to ruin a common man, but his heart is still fresh. It is pleasant to hear his friends speak of him, — the Brownings, Rossetti, Mrs. Gaskell: they all speak with warmth of his kind-

ness, his generosity, and his faithfulness. I have known few men who seem to me to have such lovable qualities. One day, as we were travelling in Italy, Mrs. Gaskell and her daughters and I were talking about the books we would choose if we were shut up in prison or on a desolate island. At last we agreed to choose one book by a living author, and when it came to Mrs. Gaskell's turn to tell us what she had chosen, she said "Modern Painters," which was the best choice, by far, that was made.

Ruskin gave me a note of introduction to Dr. Acland [1] of Oxford, his special friend, and a man very distinguished in his profession. The note was so affectionate in its expression that I should like to have kept it — not for any vanity, but because it would have pleased you to see it. . . .

Last Saturday, in London, I went to see a semi-private exhibition of pictures by some of the Pre-Raphaelites, — Rossetti, Millais, Holman Hunt, Seddon, Hughes, Davis, and others. Many of the pictures are interesting, some of them beautiful, many of them full of thought, and as careful, exact studies from nature, some of them are hardly to be surpassed. Rossetti's are by far the best, for in force and beauty of colour he stands above the others, and also in depth and delicacy of imaginative power. Among his pictures were those of "Mary, the Mother of Jesus" and the "Mary Magdalene" that we saw at Ruskin's last year, the picture of Dante's vision at the time of the death of Beatrice, and, as a companion-piece to this, the

[1] Sir Henry Wentworth Acland, appointed in 1858 Regius Professor of Medicine at Oxford.



JOHN RUSKIN ABOUT 1858

anniversary of the death of Beatrice, representing Dante becoming aware of the presence of the persons who had been watching him as he drew an angel upon certain tablets. The picture of Seddon[1] of Mount Zion was admirable as a portrait of the scene. Altogether the collection represented artists faithfully studying from nature, and depicting her as they found her, not content with conventional modes of painting, sincere, and always bringing before you something worth attentive study, though perhaps occasionally running into excess in very minuteness, and attempting impossibilities. When, as with Rossetti, these characteristics are combined with real poetic feeling and the exquisite sense of colour, they produce works which no others of our day can be compared with. The whole exhibition of seventy-two pictures is in striking contrast to the Paris exhibition of twenty-seven hundred. In that were cleverness, absence of feeling, and the study of what was effective and sensational, rather than what was true. I believe great good will come out of this school of the Pre-Raphaelites, and that its influence will do much for the art of the next generation.

OXFORD, 9 July, 1857.

. . . Ruskin spent Tuesday evening with me, and we had a long and interesting and intimate talk. About ten o'clock Dr. Acland came in, and the talk went on for an hour longer. The more I see of Dr. Acland, the

[1] Special exhibitions of the paintings of Eastern subjects by John Seddon (1821–1856) had been held in London in 1855 and 1856.

more his clear, strong good sense and feeling strike me. He told many stories about the people in and around Oxford, some of them amusing, some of them pathetic. He said that to one of the common field labourers you must on an average put a question three times before you could get an answer, their intellectual perceptions are so dull and the avenues to their minds so stopped up. . . . "The people hear that you are speaking to them, and answer at random till the idea of what you are saying slowly filters into their heads."

On Wednesday afternoon Ruskin came into town to see me, and after going with me to Christ Church to look at the fine old hall, and to see the rooms which he occupied when an undergraduate, I drove back with him to the little picturesque village of Cowley, near which is the little farmhouse where he is living. We stopped on our way, a little out of the way, at the Church of Littlemore which Newman built when he was yet in the Church of England, and which is a good example of the highest Oxford principles in architecture adapted to other church principles. It is good in design and construction, but the narrow windows filled with painted glass let in so little light that on a cloudy day it would be difficult to read within the church. The decoration of the altar and chancel is tasteful, the best, Ruskin says, that he knows in England, but thoroughly Romanish in its character and entirely fit for a Roman church; all the instruments of the Passion and the Five Wounds are represented in the midst of symbolic ornaments. At the farmhouse Ruskin read me parts of one of the lectures which he

is to deliver, and then we had a pleasant walk through the village to look at some old cottages with queer irregularities of gable, roof and window, the yellow moss growing on their tiles, and the green mould half hiding their old thatch. They looked as if they had "kind er growed" and had that picturesque charm which belongs to every building that is the expression of the needs and tastes of many successive occupants. We returned to the farmhouse to a pleasant tea, and were joined by Dr. and Mrs. Acland and Professor and Mrs. Brodie.[1] We looked at some of Turner's sketches and etchings, at one or two of Ruskin's own drawings, and about ten o'clock, by moonlight, — the afternoon had been a perfect English summer afternoon, — I returned to town with the rest of the party except Acland, who was to spend the night with Ruskin. Ruskin himself left for the North early this, Thursday, morning.

Through other letters and notebook jottings in July, Norton's experiences in London and Manchester[2] where he went to stay with the Gaskells, may also be followed. By the middle of August he was once more with his mother and sisters, at Lenox in his native New England. That he had returned to America desirous to fill his life with work may be inferred from a brief passage in a letter to F. J. Child, written from

[1] Benjamin Collins Brodie, the younger, became professor of chemistry at Oxford in 1855.

[2] The "Art Treasures Exhibition," which Norton described in the first issue of the *Atlantic Monthly* (November, 1857), was then in progress at Manchester.

Highwood, Lenox, the summer home of his sister, Mrs. Bullard, August 17, 1857: "The contrast between America and Europe never struck me so forcibly as it does now. The grandeur of our opportunities is proportionate to the immensity of our deficiencies, — so that one may rejoice to be an American even while seeing how far we fall short in many ways of what is accomplished elsewhere, and how much we have to do to make life what it ought to be and might be. But to be contented here one must work."

CHAPTER V

LETTERS AND POLITICS

(1857–1861)

THROUGH the period between Norton's return from Europe in the summer of 1857 and the outbreak of the Civil War he put into practice, as completely as circumstances would permit, his belief that work was the true condition of existence in America. Dividing the time, as before, between Cambridge and Newport, but dropping the duties of a business office in Boston, and spending even the winter of 1857–58 in Newport, he devoted himself to the writing of articles and reviews — chiefly for the "Atlantic Monthly," which, in the years immediately following its establishment in 1857, published a number of his contributions — and to the preparation of two books of his own. The first — "The New Life of Dante, An Essay, with Translations" (privately printed in a limited edition in 1859) — was the consummation of the work on which he was engaged in Rome two years before. The second — "Notes of Travel and Study in Italy" — published later in the same year, contained the sketches already mentioned as having appeared in "The Crayon," with some added chapters that had not previously been printed. The book, which grew out of the notes taken in Italy between December of 1855 and April of 1857, deals with pictures, architecture, religion,

customs, — and indicates in its range and nature that for Norton travel meant indeed study. It reveals also no small acquisition of historical knowledge, and, in the light of later years, stands in a vital relation to Norton's subsequent Italian studies. Throughout his life, as a contemporary has recently pointed out, his scholarship was carried so lightly that it was not realized except by those whose intellectual interests led into the same fields as his own.

A new friendship also belongs to this period of Norton's life. Shortly before 1860 he first met Chauncey Wright, the New England mathematician and philosopher, whose fame did not spread far beyond his immediate circle, but whose influence within that circle was potent. It was in the sixties that the personal intercourse between Norton and Wright attained an intimacy which led Norton, in 1870, to the writing of a biographical introduction to Wright's "Philosophical Discussions," published after his death. But the sympathy between the two men had begun almost with their first acquaintance. It was so close that a portion of the characterization of Wright by their common friend, Professor Ephraim W. Gurney, may serve as an interpretation of the mental and spiritual attitude which gradually came to have most attraction for Norton himself. "[He] was by intellectual temperament a sceptic, in the best sense of the term, an on-looker who is interested neither to prove nor to disprove, but to judge; and, when there is insufficient material for judging, to hold his mind in suspense, — a suspense, however, which contains no element of pain. Upon his

chart of the Universe, the *terra incognita* of the not-proven that stretched between the firm ground of the proved and the void of the disproved, included some of the chief beliefs to which mankind has clung; but it should be said also that he admitted the entire rightfulness of the claim of Faith to take possession of any portion of this territory, provided she did it in her own name: there might even be much solid and goodly land there, and not mere mirage of tradition and the emotions; he denied only that it lay within the range of man's experience, and therefore of knowledge in the sense in which he understood and used that term."[1]

These views, removed indeed from the inherited classifications and beliefs in which Norton had grown to manhood, were, in their nature, not of sudden fermenting force: *Sturm und Drang* were foreign to his temper of mind. Their effects do not immediately appear in his letters to his friends, but they were none the less essentially to affect his intellectual relation to life, though at the same time in no shade or sense to alter his sympathy with the sentiment with which Jew or Gentile approaches the religion of his fathers.

To Clough, nearing the end of his days, and to Lowell, Norton's letters were at this time frequent; but new correspondents, to whom he could express himself with almost equal sympathy as to these tried friends, now appear.

The events leading up to the Civil War gave special significance to national affairs, the observation of

[1] See *Letters of Chauncey Wright, with Some Account of His Life*, by James Bradley Thayer, p. 381.

which had already become as important to Norton as his scholarly pursuits.

To A. H. Clough

HIGHWOOD, LENOX, MASS.
22 August, 1857.

I reached home week before last, after a pleasant voyage, and had the happiness of finding my Mother and sisters well. All the country had an English greenness. . . . The prospects for the new and as yet unnamed Magazine[1] continue excellent; — (but in my trunk[2] were several mss. besides yours for it, that had been sent to me to carry over;) — the first number will probably not appear before the 1st November; perhaps, owing to this loss and other causes, not before 1st January. So pray send over to Mr. Underwood[3] or to me, another copy of the "Amours de Voyage" as soon as may be, — if you should not have kept a copy I shall be sorrier than ever for this loss, — and I shall feel it really pretty hard to bear with that equanimity which one ought to keep, — and which I know you will keep.

And now let me go to some pleasanter subject, — and this part of my letter you can leave to be read till after the first shock of vexation is gone. — I found Lowell very well and in capital spirits, having just returned from a wild, camping-out journey in the Adiron-

[1] The *Atlantic Monthly*.

[2] Lost on the journey, but later recovered. The incident is related in an article by Norton in the fiftieth anniversary number of the *Atlantic*, November, 1907.

[3] F. H. Underwood, Lowell's editorial associate in the early conduct of the *Atlantic*.

dack Mountains.[1] He had been cutting paths through woods in which no paths had ever been made before, he had shot a bear that was swimming a lake, he had seen herds of wild deer, and measured pine trees whose trunks three men could not clasp round; — and all this in the midst of superb and unusual scenery. Our American semi-civilization lies all round this tract, but has not yet penetrated into it. He has been working hard this year, — and has written a good deal, chiefly lectures, some of which I hear are very admirable. . . .

Our political condition, so far at least as I understand it, seems a curious one, — the fact being that nobody knows what it is. Buchanan has as yet given no sign of a policy; and the country is drifting along without government. The troubles are not over in Kansas and are likely to continue there for some time longer; but there seems to be little doubt but that she will be admitted as a Free State, possibly with a constitution neither permitting nor prohibiting slavery, but virtually free. The South is still potent at Washington, and will make a great effort to bring in a new Slave State formed from territory lying south of Kansas or from Western Texas at the same time. But the North has learned one great fact during the struggle of the last three years, — the power of organized emigration, — and centres of free population are now being established in different parts of this new country which will be kept together by having a church, a

[1] See account of the Adirondack Club, of which Emerson, Agassiz, Lowell, S. G. Ward, Norton, and others were members, in W. J. Stillman's *Autobiography of a Journalist*. Norton's far from vigorous health in these years prevented him from "roughing it" in the woods, as his friends did.

sawmill, and a schoolhouse, and supplied with aid until they become strong and vigorous settlements. Western Texas may yet become free territory. In Missouri the question of emancipation is the great battle-field of discussion just now; this is good; the lists have never before been open, but it has become too manifest that Slavery makes Missouri poor, to keep them closed any longer. From Utah we have nothing new. It does not seem to be thought that the Saints will fight. . . .

I will write to you soon again when I trust I shall have nothing disagreeable to tell you. . . . I am ever,

Affectionately yours,

CHARLES E. NORTON.

To A. H. Clough

BOSTON, 25 October, 1857.

. . . Lowell, whom I saw yesterday, told me that he had just received the *first part* of the "Amours de Voyage." I was very glad to hear it. It will appear (I believe) in the December number of the "Atlantic." As to the "Plutarch," it may give you some little consolation to know that even if the whole book had been printed at this time, and no misfortune had occurred to delay it, — it would not be published this year. The times are adverse to new books, and Little & Brown may be glad to keep back the publication until the present widespread financial troubles have passed, and affairs resume more of their common aspect. There are very few persons whose property has not undergone some diminution, and every one will for the

present retrench their expenses as far as possible. . . . The times are "hard but wholesome," as old President Quincy says, — and though for six months there will be a good deal of gloom, and many people will feel as if the end of the world were near, America will not fail nor will any of the essential elements of her prosperity be destroyed. I am glad of the present difficulties. They make men stop and consider, and they will, for a few years at least, check the social extravagance which had reached a ridiculous, and sometimes pathetic, excess; they will interfere with our filibuster's[1] plans; will bring down the price of cotton and lower the value of slaves; will reduce the wages of labour and render the competition between free labour and slave labour more bitter, and more bitter and more convincing against slavery than ever. That they might introduce a higher morality, or rather a lesser immorality, into our politics is almost too much to hope; — but our national treasury is feeling the drain upon it, our national revenue is very much diminished for the present, — will continue much smaller for a year or two, and we shall not be able to go to war without contracting a debt, and we shall not have one hundred millions of dollars with which to make an offer for Cuba. Kansas affairs are still unsettled, — but the chances seem to be in favour of the Free State party there. There will be a good deal of splutter, however, before things settle down quietly there. . . .

I dined yesterday with a pleasant party: — Lowell, Holmes, Emerson, Edmund Quincy, Underwood, and

[1] William Walker was still engaged in Nicaraguan filibustering.

Phillips the publisher. It was a sort of magazine dinner. Everybody was bright and there was much good talk. The first number will be out in a few days, and you will have seen it before my letter gets to you. I like its appearance, and you will find some admirable and some very brilliant articles. Motley writes the "Florentine Mosaics"; you will not doubt who wrote "Santa Filomena," a beautiful little poem it is.[1] Holmes is the "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table"; Emerson's poems and essay do not need to be signed; Lowell contributes only the "Origin of Didactic Poetry," and the Sonnet; but the first of these is in his happiest vein, and quite inimitably good. . . . Whittier writes the "Tritemius," and Mrs. Stowe, the "Mourning Veil." I have told you all these spite of a saying of Emerson's which applies only to the two last, — "The names of contributors will be given only when the names are worth more than the articles." The next number will be as good as the first. . . .

To A. H. Clough

NEWPORT, December 6, 1857.

. . . Congress meets to-morrow, — with a large, but fortunately wholly united, Democratic majority in both branches. The President's present latitude is a far Southern one, — and the Cabinet is strongly pro-Slavery. Kansas is still the chief ground of trouble. The phases in its condition follow one so rapidly upon another that it is difficult to keep up with them. In a few words the present state of affairs is this. The

[1] By Longfellow.

"Missouri" Legislature of Kansas, so called because chiefly voted for by, and composed of, Missourians, and which the mass of the people of Kansas refused to acknowledge, passed a law calling a Convention to form a Constitution, that should be presented to Congress previous to the admission of Kansas as a State. The people of Kansas, generally not recognizing the acts of this Legislature, did not vote for delegates to this Convention. The members elected were without a single exception pro-Slavery men, and chosen by a very small minority of the voters. The Convention[1] has formed a Constitution, which it does not propose to submit to the popular vote. It proposes to submit only one clause, — which relates to the existence of Slavery; — even this clause does not cover the whole question, and is a mere fraud; for, granting that the people voted, and voted to have a Constitution in which the word Slavery should not be mentioned, the rest of the Constitution as prepared by the Convention would still hold, — and in this the laws passed by the Missouri or Bogus Legislature are confirmed as fundamental laws, and those laws not only recognize but guarantee property in slaves. What then is to be done? Nine tenths of the people of Kansas are indignant. The Governor, appointed by Mr. Buchanan, protests against the action of the Convention. Some of the members of the Convention itself declared they would not be parties to such a manifest piece of trickery. But the President supports the action of the

[1] Meeting at the Kansas town of Lecompton which gave the constitution its popular name.

Convention, and the South generally is vehement in its favour. It will be the first question in Congress, and all the power of the Administration will be brought to bear on the Northern Democratic members to bring them to the support of the President's position. Kansas, however, will not submit, and if worst comes to worst, the spirit there is such that the people would fight sooner than yield. It is rumoured, and with some probability I think, that the affair will be allowed to go on embittering a little time, and that then Senator Douglas (who is in hopes of the next Presidential nomination) will bring forward a new Compromise and Pacification Bill, enabling the people of Kansas to form a Constitution such as shall really be in accordance with their wishes and principles, that is, virtually yielding Kansas to freedom, and providing for her entrance to the Union as a Free State; — while as an offset to this, provision is made for a Slave State or two to come in at the same time, carved out of territory to the south and west of Kansas.

These are the present circumstances and aspects of the question. Unsatisfactory enough. But I believe, as I have believed for a long time now, that the strength of the feeling against Slavery at the North is growing firmer and more decided year by year, and will before long show itself in effective action. The article in the second number of the "Atlantic,"[1] is an expression of part of this feeling. There is too great vehemence and bitterness of expression in the article for a philosophic and reflective essay on the subject

[1] "Where will it End?" by Edmund Quincy.

of the Influence of Slavery on our National Politics, but not too much for effect and popularity with the mass of readers, — and it is a new thing to see a magazine in this country take such ground. . . . The second number seems to me about as good as the first. As you say there are too many "magazinish" stories in it, — but this is necessary that it may sell in the cars and elsewhere to readers who want merely amusement. Its success has been thus far very good. More than 20,000 of the first number were, I hear, sold. The next number it is said will be quite as good as the others. Do you get the authors' names, or do you want me to send them to you? On the chance of your not knowing them all here is a list in the order of the articles for the second number: — 1, Motley; 2, Prescott; 3, Bryant; 4, Miss Terry; 5, Child; 6, Ruffini; 7, Longfellow; 8, Holmes; 9 and 10, (I don't know); 11, Cabot; 12, C. E. N.; 13, Whittier; 14, Emerson; 15, Philleo; 16, E. Q.; 17, Lowell. — I hope to see the beginning of "Amours de Voyage"[1] in the next number. . . .

To A. H. Clough

NEWPORT, 5 March, 1858.

. . . You do not do justice to your "Amours de Voyage," — which is natural enough. Horace's maxim about seven years keeping, is a bad one for men who are advancing meanwhile. How can it be but that a long past expression of thought and feeling must seem

[1] This poem of Clough's — a novel in verse — appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* for March, April and May, 1858. It was written at Rome in 1849.

inadequate and empty to ourselves, — though not so to others? Since being in Rome I like your Roman hexameters far better than I did before. . . .

In politics we are in a dangerous and obscure position. The fate of the Lecompton Constitution in Congress is doubtful; the Administration and its party are using all the efforts of unprincipled power to force it through. A more infamous and tyrannical course of procedure has never been seen in America. If Congress passes the Constitution, Kansas will resist, and her resistance will be supported effectually. The Democratic party is well split, — and Buchanan's administration is plainly to be the end of past political organizations, and, I believe, of the control of the pro-Slavery party in national affairs. There will be great excitement whichever way things turn in Congress. . . .

To A. H. Clough

NEWPORT, 14 July, 1858.

. . . Since Congress adjourned our politics are quiet. The Kansas election will come off on the 3d August, and will result in the rejection of the Lecompton pro-Slavery Constitution. It seems likely that Kansas will then form a new Free State Constitution, and insist on admission under it next winter. She will not come in, however, as a Free State without much bluster on the part of Southern politicians, and a desperate attempt to get in a Slave State, (perhaps to be formed out of part of Texas) at the same time. The condition of Mexico is so wretched, — such a complete disor-

ganization of society exists there, — that there is every reason for believing that some sufficient cause will soon be given by the acts of some one of its successive military rulers, to afford our administration a reasonable ground for seizing a larger or smaller portion of its territory, possibly for absorbing the whole. Buchanan would be glad to distinguish his term of office by a notable addition to our territory. . . .

I have just read Gladstone's book.[1] The second volume seems to me one of the most extraordinary instances in all literature of the absurdities into which scholarship and logic may be led by the authority of false traditional opinions. . . .

To A. H. Clough

NEWPORT, 16 August, 1858.

. . . The one event of the times is the successful laying of the Atlantic Telegraph Cable. The unexpected news ran through the country in a moment, and each man, woman, and child felt a thrill as it were of personal joy. It brought out all the underlying hearty feeling toward England. . . . But the delay in passing the Queen's message has bred doubt, — and every one is asking, Will it work? and no one knows. At any rate a cable can be laid, — and if this one will not answer, another must be made that will do the work. But I still hope that this will prove good.

Lowell, Emerson, Agassiz, and two or three more are camping out in the Adirondack Mountains, —

[1] Gladstone's *Studies on Homer and the Homeric Age* was published in 1858.

shooting deer, and perhaps a "b'ar" or two, catching trout, cutting their names on the birch trees, and having a general good time. They will be at home soon again. Dr. Holmes is coming to spend next week with us, — and Child is to be here on Thursday to pass the rest of the vacation with us. Newport has been basking in the sunshine of nobility and aristocracy this last fortnight, — and (whisper it not) this sunshine has produced an unusual growth of snobbishness, — for we take after our ancestors on the other side in this. . . .

To J. R. Lowell

NEWPORT, Sunday, 5 September, 1858.

If Buckle and the gout are to work such happy wonders on you, as your letters and your poem give proof of, may the gout be periodic and Buckle pour forth an unending supply of his opinions concerning man and the world.[1] I sympathize with the twinges which you have suffered; I look with added respect on my middle-aged friend who has arrived at the dignity of a foot swathed in flannel, and a gold-headed cane with which to hobble round the house; — you are elevated into the dignity of a hero of the second stage of life. Girls will no longer weep over your verses, it is true, — but gout is the true stamp of respectability, you will no longer be reckoned among the "dangerous" writers, you are a classic, — gout has immortalized you, and hence-

[1] This letter is in answer to one of Lowell's (August 31, 1858), printed in the *Letters of James Russell Lowell*, expressing his admiration for many things in Buckle, and referring to the poem "The Dead House," of which he sent a manuscript copy to Miss Jane Norton.

forth you are sure to range among the poets in the great double-column collections. The gout is as good for the past too as for the future, — does it not give you a sense that your ancestors were gentlemen from top to toe? — even half a dozen preceding divines having been unable to stop the flow of their wasteful claret into your veins.

I come back to my letter sobered by dinner and reflections.

The poem you enclosed in the letter to Jane seems to me exceedingly beautiful, — if I am not mistaken, one of your best. I like the first part the best, — the sentiment in it is charming from its freshness, simplicity, and directness, — and I am . . . most affectionately pleased that the thought of our house at Newport should have led to such result.

We had a most pleasant visit from Holmes except that he had the asthma, and suffered much during the few days he stayed. But he fought against it most manfully, and kept up his spirits and his agreeableness in a wonderful way, — and if he enjoyed his visit half as much as we did he had a good time in spite of his asthma. . . .

I agree with almost all you say about Buckle most heartily. But I regard him as a more hasty generalizer than you seem to do, — and therefore as likely rather to increase the prevalent evil of American thought than to interpose any check to it. His generalizations are negative, — or, to express my thought better, his most important statements are generally in the form of denials. He denies the influence of morals on civili-

zation, he denies the influence of race, he refuses to take individual character into consideration as affecting the course of civilization, he denies the value of Christianity as either containing in itself or being the source of any advance in the religious ideas or the moral standard of the world, and so on. All these seem to me hasty and ill-considered generalizations. The book is continually provoking from its very excellence, — for its goodness is the suggestion of how much better it might be. . . .

To J. R. Lowell

NEWPORT, 14th October, 1858.

. . . I am sorry that you have been working so hard, — though the result is indeed worth all your labour. I read aloud the article on Cushing[1] last night with the greatest satisfaction. It is admirably done, and will produce much effect. . . . I shall be glad now to have the Magazine — that is to have you — take open ground for Seward as the leader of the next Presidential campaign. Seward seems to me not merely the best statesman in the country, but the most available man for the Republican party. We must nominate a man who is known, — and not take up with a candidate likely to be strong simply because not known. To have such a President as Seward would be worth exertion, not merely for the sake of winning a party victory but for that of national honour. Perhaps it might be as well to put Douglas out of the way first

[1] An article on Caleb Cushing which Lowell had just written for the *Atlantic Monthly*. It appeared, November, 1858, under the title, "A Sample of Consistency."

by a strong review of his course, and then to open with a salute to Seward. . . .

We had a pleasant visit from George Curtis last week. Married life has brought the best influences to him; he is more in earnest, and more thoughtful than ever, — and with his old sweetness and good nature. He delivered a capital lecture on "Democracy and Education," manly, high-toned, excellently delivered, and quite admirable as reaching the sensibilities of common audiences.[1] . . . He is already deep in politics, and predicts the defeat of the Republican state ticket in New York. Perhaps the gains in other states may change the aspect there. . . .

To A. H. Clough

NEWPORT, Sunday evening, 27 August, 1859.

. . . A note from Lowell this morning tells me of his return from the Adirondacks where he had "a good time and stiff work which set me all right again. I have had leisure as yet to read only the first Idyll. It seemed to me rather below Tennyson. The versification is too uniform."

But I agree with you about the "Idylls," and so I think will Lowell when he has read the remainder, — that this volume is decidedly the best thing Tennyson has done, the most manly, the most completely

[1] Owing to the failure of a publishing firm with which he was connected Curtis had "assumed a large indebtedness for which he was not legally bound, and for nearly a score of years laboured incessantly to pay it, devoting to that purpose the money earned by lecturing. It was an arduous task involving not merely the work of preparation and the time spent in traveling, but much hardship and exposure." See Cary's *Life of G. W. Curtis*.

poetic. From the beginning to the end you are in the poet's world. Yet, — yet — yet after all I like old Sir Thomas Malory better. The public has bought Tennyson's volume, — 15,000 copies sold in the first month of its publication, — but has the public liked it? That is doubtful, but I believe it has, — for it must at least have been entertained by such well-told stories.

I am busy reprinting (privately) my articles on the "Vita Nuova," — and am just beginning to print a little volume of Italian studies. . . .

To A. H. Clough

SHADY HILL, 6 December, 1859.

. . . Have you read the accounts of John Brown's invasion of Virginia, of his capture, trial, and death? If so you have been greatly interested in the man. His scheme was a mad one; he was legally punishable with death; but he is not the less a martyr in the cause of freedom. The whole affair has excited the deepest feeling both at the North and the South. Its results promise to be great, — whether good or not Heaven only knows. John Brown's name will be famous in our history, — and perhaps even more than famous. He is of a race of men rare in all time and lands, rare especially in our days; he was one of those men who thought themselves commissioned to do the work of the Lord, — and were ready to meet death or whatsoever else in the cause. Pray read his speech at the close of his trial; and read too the account of his death. We have had nothing like it since the days of the Regicides. He

mounts his coffin to be driven to the gallows, and looks round on the landscape, and says, "What a fine prospect!" There has been no rhetoric or mere words in his talk; and the letters he has written from prison add a noble chapter to the volume of the literature of the cell.[1] . . .

A fuller report of the feeling produced by the execution of John Brown is found in one of Norton's letters to his cousin in London, Mrs. Edward Twisleton, to whom at this time he wrote occasionally about American affairs.

To Mrs. Edward Twisleton

SHADY HILL, 13 December, 1859.

. . . I have thought often of writing to you, — especially since John Brown made his incursion into Virginia, — but it has been difficult hitherto to form a dispassionate judgment in regard to this affair, and I have not cared to write a mere expression of personal feeling. Perhaps it is even now still too near the event for one to balance justly all the considerations involved in it. Unless you have seen some one of the American papers during the last two months you can hardly have formed an idea of the intensity of feeling and interest which has prevailed throughout the country in regard to John Brown. I have seen nothing like it. We get up excitements easily enough, but they die away usually as quickly as they rose, beginning in rhetoric

[1] Above Norton's mantelpiece in his study at Ashfield, there hung a photograph of Lincoln, and, near it, one of "Old Brown."

and ending in fireworks; but this was different. The heart of the people was fairly reached, and an impression has been made upon it which will be permanent and produce results long hence.

When the news first came, in the form of vague and exaggerated telegraphic reports, of the seizure of the Arsenal at Harper's Ferry, people thought it was probably some trouble among the workmen at the place; but as the truth slowly came out and John Brown's name, which was well known through the country, was mentioned as that of the head of the party, the general feeling was that the affair was a reckless, merely mad attempt to make a raid of slaves, — an attempt fitly put down by the strong arm. There was at first no word of sympathy either for Brown or his undertaking. But soon came the accounts of the panic of the Virginians, of the cruelty with which Brown's party were massacred; of his noble manliness of demeanour when, wounded, he was taken prisoner, and was questioned as to his design; of his simple declarations of his motives and aims, which were those of an enthusiast, but not of a bad man, — and a strong sympathy began to be felt for Brown personally, and a strong interest to know in full what had led him to this course. Then the bitterness of the Virginia press, the unseemly haste with which the trial was hurried on, — and all the while the most unchanged, steady, manliness on the part of "Old Brown," increased daily the sympathy which was already strong. The management of the trial, the condemnation, the speech made by Brown, the letters he wrote in prison, the visit of his

wife to him, — and at last his death, wrought up the popular feeling to the highest point. Not, indeed, that feeling or opinion have been by any means unanimous; for on the one side have been those who have condemned the whole of Brown's course as utterly wicked, and regarded him as a mere outlaw, murderer, and traitor, while, on the other, have been those who have looked upon his undertaking with satisfaction, and exalted him into the highest rank of men. But, if I am not wrong, the mass of the people, and the best of them, have agreed with neither of these views. They have, while condemning Brown's scheme as a criminal attempt to right a great wrong by violent measures, and as equally ill-judged and rash in execution, felt for the man himself a deep sympathy and a fervent admiration. They have admitted that he was guilty under the law, that he deserved to be hung as a breaker of the law, — but they have felt that the gallows was not the fit end for a life like his, and that he died a real martyr in the cause of freedom.

Brown in truth was a man born out of time. He was of a rare type, rare especially in these days. He belonged with the Covenanters, with the Puritans. He was possessed with an idea which mastered his whole nature and gave dignity and force to his character. He had sincere faith in God, — and especially believed in the sword of the Lord. His chief fault seems to have been impatience with the slowness of Providence. Seeing what was right he desired that it should instantly be brought to pass, — and counted as the enemies of the Lord those who were opposed to him. But the earnest-

ness of his moral and religious convictions and the sincerity of his faith made him single-minded, and manly in the highest degree. There was not the least sham about him; no whining over his failure; no false or factitious sentiment, no empty words; — in everything he showed himself simple, straightforward and brave. The Governor of Virginia, Governor Wise, said of him, that he was the pluckiest man he had ever seen. And on the morning of his execution, the jailor riding with him to the gallows said to him, — "You're game, Captain Brown." And game he was to the very last. He said to the sheriff as he stepped onto the platform of the gallows, "Don't keep me waiting longer than is necessary," — and then he was kept waiting for more than ten minutes while the military made some movement that their officers thought requisite. This gratuitous piece of cruel torture has shocked the whole country. But Brown stood perfectly firm and calm through the whole.

The account of his last interview with his wife before his death, which came by telegraph, was like an old ballad in the condensed picturesqueness of its tender and tragic narrative.

You see even from this brief and imperfect statement of mine, how involved the moral relations of the whole affair have been, and how difficult the questions which arise from it are to answer.

What its results will be no one can tell, but they cannot be otherwise than great. One great moving fact remains that here was a man, who, setting himself firm on the Gospel, was willing to sacrifice himself and his

children in the cause of the oppressed, or at least of those whom he believed unrighteously held in bondage. And this fact has been forced home to the consciousness of every one by Brown's speech at his trial, and by the simple and most affecting letters which he wrote during his imprisonment. The events of this last month or two (including under the word events the impression made by Brown's character) have done more to confirm the opposition to Slavery at the North, and to open the eyes of the South to the danger of taking a stand upon this matter opposed to the moral convictions of the civilized world, — than anything which has ever happened before, than all the anti-slavery tracts and novels that ever were written.

I do not believe that other men are likely to follow John Brown in the course which he adopted, — mainly because very few of them are of his stamp, but also because almost all men see that the means he adopted were wrong. But the magnanimity of the man will do something to raise the tone of national character and feeling, — and to set in their just position the claims and the pretensions of the mass of our political leaders. John Brown has set up a standard by which to measure the principles of public men. . . .

On Decembe 26,.1859, Norton describes in the course of a letter to Mrs. Gaskell, a visit to the Physiological Museum of Harvard College, with Lowell, Torrey, and Jeffries Wyman, who was in charge of it. "The museum was cold and chilly as the gallery of a Roman palace in February," the letter says, and 'we were

glad to go down into Wyman's working-room where, round the fire, we grew warm discussing the new book of Mr. Darwin's which is exciting the admiration and the opposition of all our philosophers. Agassiz is busy in writing a review of the book, in which he intends to refute Mr. Darwin's chief contentions, — for if Darwin is right, Agassiz is wrong. You, I fancy, have not read the book. . . . I admire the patience of Mr. Darwin's research, the wide reach of his knowledge and his thought, and above all the honesty and manliness of his plain speech. His book will help to overthrow many old and cumbrous superstitions even if it establish but few truths in their place. But with what a sense of ignorance such books oppress one, — not merely of one's own ignorance, just as it may be, but of that of the men who know most in any special field."

Echoes of the discussion aroused by the publication of the "Origin of Species" (1859) are in all contemporaneous literature; yet there cannot but be an appeal to the imagination in any reference, however slight, to the first appearance of that book — "a book," says Norton, writing of it in 1907, "perhaps as important, not only in its immediate but in its remote effects, as any ever issued from the press."

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, CAMBRIDGE, 15 January, 1860.

. . . A fortnight hence I hope you will be with us. How pleasant it will be to see you once more! We shall all be delighted to welcome you. The years are hardly fair to us that give us but an annual meeting, and I

SHADY HILL, ABOUT 1857

trust that this new one, this 1860, will treat us both more kindly by bringing us oftener together than the last. It is ten years now, or will be in the spring, since we first knew each other. Paris, Shady Hill, Newport, New York, are the various places which your affection has made happier for me. Do you recall the pleasant spring evening when we first met in the Café de Paris? How young we were then! I am not certain that we have grown very old since then, — but what years of experience these ten have been for us both! The next ten will be shorter, — so love me more during their course to make up for their quicker passage.

What you say about the Harpers is at once satisfactory and vexatious. As long as you feel bound to devote yourself to money-making, and they pay you so well, — so long I suppose you must keep to them, — but I shall be truly glad when the time comes that you can cut loose from them, and work more after your own pleasure, and more in other fields than those which they own and occupy. . . .

In a letter to Mrs. Gaskell there is a full account of the Boston Model Lodging-Houses,[1] on behalf of which Norton had rendered effective service soon after his return from India. Both for its biographical bearing and as a record of an early social experiment, the passage is of interest here.

[1] See "Model Lodging-Houses in Boston," by C. E. Norton, *Atlantic Monthly*, June, 1860.

To Mrs. Gaskell

SHADY HILL, 7 February, 1860.

. . . I must come to our Model Lodging-Houses. In the first place I am sorry to say that not so much has been done to provide good and economical houses for our poor as ought to have been done. The immense flood of emigration from Ireland and Germany, from about 1840 to 1855, crowded our Atlantic cities with poor, and no proper means could be taken to provide them with suitable homes. For a long time we let things take their own course, but at last they grew so intolerable that a partial effort was made to improve them. There had been more or less talk and feeling about the need of action, when in the winter of 1852 I wrote an article on "Dwellings and Schools for the Poor," for the "North American Review." I gave in it an account of some of your English Model Houses, and had woodcuts made for it of the elevation and plan of the house lately put up in Sweatham Street in London. The article excited some attention. In the course of the following summer I got a plan drawn for a house in Boston, and in December I drew up a circular which was signed by four of our leading men, setting forth a proposal for building a Model Lodging-House on a large scale, and estimating the cost of land and building at $40,000. A subscription was opened, and the sum needed was secured in the course of the winter of 1853. A lot of land in a central place was obtained, and in the course of that year and the next two houses of brick, each with tenements for twenty families, were built. . . .

The houses were first occupied in 1854. They were at

once filled. In 1855 I went abroad, and from that time till this winter I have known but little about them, except that they were going on well. This winter I was again chosen on the board of Directors, and it was but last week that I attended a meeting of the Directors and heard a report of their doings and the condition of the houses. From the time of the first occupation of the houses to this not a single tenement has been vacant for over a week. Above $30,000 of rent have become due and been paid; not a single dollar has been lost. The rents were fixed at a rate which, while allowing a certain sum for repairs and for depreciation in the property, should give a clear annual return of six per cent on the investment. It has been found that even this rate was moderate and easily paid in proportion to the rents asked and paid for very far inferior accommodations. The money expended in building has thus been proved to be a good investment in a merely mercenary point of view. The rents received for the first three years were reserved until they had accumulated to an amount sufficient to build another house upon an unoccupied part of the land which we owned, with accommodations of a somewhat superior order for mechanics. This house is now occupied by nine families, the lower story being used for a store.

The hope with which the houses were put up, that they might stimulate private individuals to improve the habitations of the poor, and to erect new ones of a similar kind, has been so far fulfilled, that the association by which these Model Houses were erected considers that its work is virtually done. Great improvements have been made in the old lodging houses through-

out the city; and many builders have adopted our plans more or less fully in erecting new houses. One builder alone has erected tenements for between twenty and thirty families, the arrangements of which are in great part copied from those of our houses.

Besides, Mr. Abbott Lawrence (whom you remember in England) left by will $50,000 for the erection of Model Houses. This bequest has not yet been received by the Trustees, but it is probable that it will be paid over this year by his executors, and the work which he desired be at once begun.

This is the history of what has been done in Boston. In New York I am afraid, from what I hear, there are no houses to compare with those in Boston. There are various establishments of the utmost excellence, like the Five Points House of Industry, the News Boys' Lodging Room, etc., etc., for the accommodation and improvement of the very lowest and vagrant classes, but, so far as I know, no special houses for the honest and self-supporting poor, on a plan which shall secure their comfort and health. . . .

A pleasant little episode touching Norton, Ruskin, and Rossetti connects itself with this time. Norton's interest in Rossetti — whose work he had admired in London in 1857 — had not lessened, and he had asked Rossetti to paint a picture for him. Rossetti accepted the order, and Ruskin one day in his studio, seeing the picture Rossetti had intended for Norton, and thinking it did not represent Rossetti so nearly at his best as he would have him known, chose

another painting of Rossetti's — a scene from the "Vita Nuova" — and sent it to Norton as a gift. Rossetti himself appears with some frequency in Norton's correspondence, and a passage in one of his letters expresses, with a touch of revealing pathos, a thought natural enough to one for whom the Norton's house in Cambridge was but a name: "Your 'Shady Hill,'" wrote Rossetti, "is a tempting address, where one would wish to be. It reminds one somehow of the 'Pilgrim's Progress,' where the pleasant names of Heavenly places really make you feel as if you could get there if the journey could be made in that very way, — the pitfalls plain to the eye and all the wicked people with wicked names. I find no shady hill or vale, though, in these places and pursuits which I have to do with. It seems all glare and change, and nothing well done. Another man might do better, no doubt, and find the shade that he could work in. But I see it is to be always thus with me."

The following letter to "the gentle singer" whom Norton had come to know in Rome shows how closely he kept in touch with distant friends, even those whose immediate interests lay remote from his own. With de Vere, faithful and Catholic at heart as by belief, intercourse was maintained until the poet's death in 1902.

To Aubrey de Vere

NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND, 28 May, 1860.

. . . You suggest a delightful task in proposing to me to make a study of Chaucer, for the sake of rendering him more popular among the careless and indolent

readers of the present day. I should be greatly tempted to undertake it were it not that to me much of the essential charm of Chaucer lies in his very words, and I cannot regard him as a foreigner needing to be translated. The best modernizations of his "Tales" have lost that morning freshness of idiom, that clear, spring-like tone which makes his verse the simplest and gladdest that ever was written. It is so very little trouble to learn enough of old English to read him easily that I wonder he — truly the heartiest, the healthiest, and the happiest of all English poets — should be so little read. It shows how desperately indolent we have become.

What will be the result of all the looseness and avoidance of thought, all the dislike of continuous study, all the mental dissipation which seeks for constant stimulants and finds no lack of them, — it is hard enough to say. Perhaps we shall soon come much to the same state as existed before the discovery of printing. There will be a few profound scholars, a few deep thinkers, while the mass of readers will be no better off than if they had no books at all. . . .

To J. R. Lowell

NEWPORT, 3 June, 1860.

. . . Are you pleased that Mr. Everett has consented to take the nomination for the Vice Presidency? His letter reminds me of the advertisement of "the retired Doctor whose sands of life have nearly run out." We have patriots left. In the view of the Union party it would seem that the Union itself were in a similar con-

dition to the English gunboats, planks rotted, sham copper bolts not driven half through, and a general condition of unsoundness making them wholly unsafe in a sea.

Yet if the Vengeur should go down under the waves, Bell and Everett will be seen upon the upper deck waving their hands in a graceful oratorical way, and crying with melancholy voice, *Vive la République*. . . .

To J. R. Lowell

NEWPORT, 29 June, 1860.

. . . My Uncle and Aunt Ticknor are with us now. As long as he and I keep off from approaching certain dangerous topics, we have a pleasant time, for he has some delightful domestic qualities, besides possessing a marvellous store of information and of entertaining stories. He has seen so much and so many of the most interesting people of this century, and has so strong a memory, that his talk is often of the most agreeable, gossipy, anecdotical sort. Yesterday afternoon for instance he was giving me his reminiscences for two or three hours of Madame Récamier, of Béranger, of Sainte-Beuve, of Varnhagen von Ense, of Humboldt, of Ancillon, and other celebrities. He did not like Varnhagen, thought him superficial, conceited, a hunter after petty distinctions, a hanger-on of noted men, and he said he was not much liked by those who knew him at Berlin. It was always a wonder how Rahel came to marry him, and Ancillon told Mr. Ticknor one day at dinner that he had once asked Rahel why she married him, and that her answer had

been "Pour montrer combien je fais peu de cas de mariage." One would hardly think this to be a true statement on her part. You remember her expressions toward her husband (which, to be sure, he edited) — I know them only by the extracts which Carlyle gives in his essay on Varnhagen. . . .

To A. H. Clough

NEWPORT, 24 September, 1860.

. . . The progress of Garibaldi is just now even of greater interest to us than that of our own election campaign.[1] It is a fine thing to be living in times which can produce such a man, and in which such events as those in Italy are taking place. History was never more interesting than now. The new birth of Italy is already the grandest event of the modern period. It gives one fresh hope for the future, — and whatever disappointments may follow enough has already been done to confirm faith, and to make patience easy. . . .

You will find in the number of the "Atlantic" for October, an excellent and able article by Lowell on "The Election in November," which gives as fair a view as I have seen of our political conditions and prospects. The first article in the same number is by Hawthorne, — the second is mine, and the one on Darwin is by Dr. Gray. The controversy about Darwin's book has been carried on with great activity and animation among our men of science. The best among

[1] In June Norton had written to Clough: "I have been at work to get up a public meeting in the hope of thus reaching the hearts and the pockets of some of the rich summer residents of Newport."

them seem to be ready to admit that his theory though not proved, and not likely to be proved and accepted in all its parts, is one of those theories which help science by weakening some long-established false notions, and by suggestions leading toward truth if not actually embracing it. . . .

There is not much new and of worth in literature. Olmsted's "Journey in the Back Country" is worth reading. It gives a curious and instructive picture of society and life in the Southwestern Slave States. I regard Olmsted's three volumes of travels in the Slave States as the most important contributions to an exact acquaintance with the conditions and result of slavery in this country that have ever been published. They have a permanent value, and will be chief materials for our social history whenever it is written. . . .

In November of 1860, Norton was writing to Miss Gaskell: "I hope before long to have published a new edition of my friend Clough's poems, — which have never had in England half the credit they deserve, and which are prized at their worth only by a small circle of readers here. You will like them, and will wonder how such good things could be so neglected."

To A. H. Clough

SHADY HILL, 11 December, 1860.

. . . Confusion and alarm are the order of the day with us. The movement for the breaking-up of the Union has acquired a most unexpected force. No one could have supposed beforehand that the South would

be so blind to its own interests, so deaf to every claim of safety and honour, as to take such a course as it has done since the election a month ago. This course if followed out must bring ruin to the Southern States, and prolonged distress to the North. We are waiting on chance and accident to bring events. Everything in our future is uncertain, everything is possible. The South is in great part mad. *Deus vult perdere.* There is no counsel anywhere; no policy proposed. Every man is anxious; no one pretends to foresee the issue out of trouble. I have little hope that the Union can be preserved. The North cannot concede to the demands of the South, and even if it could and did, I doubt whether the result would be conciliation. The question is now fairly put, whether Slavery shall rule, and a nominal Union be preserved for a few years longer; or Freedom rule and the Union be broken up. The motives which the Southern leaders put forward for disunion are mere pretexts; their real motives are disappointed ambition, irritated pride, and the sense that power which they have so long held has now passed out of their hands.

There is little use in speculating on the consequences of disunion. If but one or two States secede, if the terrorism now established in South Carolina, Georgia, Mississippi, and Alabama, and which has strength to control every expression of sentiment opposed to disunion, — if this terrorism be broken through, and a chance be given for the conservative opinion in these States to manifest itself, it is possible that secession may take place without violence. But

if, on the other hand, the excited feeling now prevalent should extend and gather force, peaceable secession becomes hardly possible, and all the horrors of servile insurrection and civil war loom up vaguely in the not distant future.

At present there is universal alarm; general financial pressure, great commercial embarrassment. The course of trade between the North and the South is interrupted; many manufacturing establishments are closed or working on short time; there are many failures, and many workmen thrown out of employment. This general embarrassment of business is shared in by foreign commerce, and must be sympathetically felt in England. The prospects of the next cotton crop are most uncertain.

The North stands in a perfectly fair position. It waits for action on the part of the South. It has little to regret in its past course, and nothing to recede from. It would not undo the election of Mr. Lincoln if it could; for it recognizes the fact that the election affords no excuse for the course taken by the South, that there was nothing aggressive in it and nothing dangerous to real Southern interests. It feels that this is but the crisis of a quarrel which is not one of parties but of principles, and it is on the whole satisfied that the dispute should be brought to a head, and its settlement no longer deferred. It is, however, both astonished and disappointed to find that the South should prefer to take all the risks of ruin to holding fast to the securities afforded to its institutions and to all the prosperity established by the Union. It is a sad thing, most

sad indeed, to see the reckless flinging away of such blessings as we have hitherto enjoyed; most sad to contemplate as a near probability the destruction of our national existence; saddest of all to believe that the South is bringing awful calamities upon itself. But on the other hand there is a comfort in the belief that, whatever be the result of present troubles, the solution of Slavery will be found in it; and that the nature of these difficulties, the principles involved in them, and the trials that accompany them, will develop a higher tone of feeling and a nobler standard of character than have been common with us of late.

All we have to do at the North is to stand firm to those principles which we have asserted and which we believe to be just, — to have faith that though the heavens fall, liberty and right shall not fail, and that though confusion and distress prevail for the time in the affairs of men there is no chance and no anarchy in the universe.

We are reaping the whirlwind, — but when reaped the air will be clearer and more healthy.

I write hastily, for it is almost the mail hour, and I want to send this to you to-day. But even were I to write at length and with all deliberation, I could do no more than show you more fully the condition of anxious expectancy in which we wait from day to day, and of general distress among the commercial community.

Of course in these circumstances there is little interest felt in other than public affairs. It is a bad time for literature; the publishers are drawing in their undertakings; — and among other postponements is that

of your poems. So much do our personal concerns depend on political issues. The only new book of interest is Emerson's.[1] It was published a day or two since and could not have appeared at a fitter time, for it is full of counsels to rebuke cowardice, to confirm the moral principles of men, and to base them firmly on the unshaken foundations of eternal laws. It is a book to be read more than once. It is full of real wisdom, but the wisdom is mingled with the individual notions of its author, which are not always wise. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, 17 December, 1860.

. . . In these present times of alarm and suspense my chief fear is lest we of the North should fail to see that the time has now come when the dispute between the North and the South can be settled finally, and therefore ought to be settled and not deferred. I am afraid lest we may yield some part of our convictions and be false to our principles. The longer we stave off settlement by compromises and concessions, the heavier will be the reckoning when the day of settlement at length comes. This is no time for timid counsels. Safety no less than honour demands of us to take a firm stand, and to shrink from none of the consequences of the resolute maintenance of our principles, — the principles of justice and of liberty. I believe that New England is stronger than New Africa. A nominal union is not worth preserving at the price that is asked for it.

For my own part I think it most likely that we shall

[1] *The Conduct of Life.*

come at length to the rifle and the sword as the arbitrators of the great quarrel, — and I have no fear for the result. The discipline of steel is what we need to recover our tone. But I pity the South; and look forward with the deepest sorrow and compassion to the retribution they are preparing for themselves. The harvest they must reap is one of inevitable desolation. . . .

To A. H. Clough

SHADY HILL, 10 February, 1861.

. . . Well, since I wrote last to you, great things have been going on here. It has been no time for writing letters, for the speculations of one day were forgotten the next in the new aspect of affairs. Not even yet is there any certainty as to the result of our present troubles and excitements, so far as the South is concerned. It is still doubtful whether the states that have already left the Union will be the only ones to do so, or whether the whole body of Slave States will go off and set up an attempt at a Confederacy to be managed in the interest of the owners of slaves, and for the protection and extension of slavery. There is little to choose between the two. For many reasons, political, social, and economical, it would be desirable to keep the northern tier of Slave States united with the Free States; but on the other hand, if they go off, the Free States no longer have any connection with or responsibility for Slavery. For my own part I have been hopeful from the beginning that the issue of these troubles, whatever it might be, would be for the advantage of the North, and for the permanent and

essential weakening of the Slave power; and I see no reason to change this opinion. The truth is that it is the consciousness of power having gone from their hands that has induced the revolutionists of the South to take the hasty, violent, and reckless steps they have done. It is not the oppression of the North, it is not any interference with the interests of the South, it is not John Brown, or Kansas, or the principles of the Republican party, that are the causes of secession, — but it is the fact that the South, which has heretofore, from the beginning, controlled the government of the country, is now fairly beaten, and that it prefers revolution to honest acknowledgment of defeat and submission to it. But disunion is no remedy for defeat; the South is beaten in the Union or out of it. If the Slave States had accepted in a manly way their new position they would have secured their own interests. Slavery would not have been interfered with. But the course they have pursued has already done more work in damaging Slavery as an institution than all the labours of the Abolitionists could have effected for years. The competition for the supply of cotton which has now been effectually roused will be the great means by which slave labour will be rendered unprofitable to the owners of slaves; and as soon as they find this out Slavery will cease to be defended as a Divine Institution, and as the necessary basis of the best form of society. In fact we are seeing now the beginning of the death struggles of Slavery; and there is no ground for wonder at the violence of its convulsions.

Civil war between the Free and the Slave States is a

remote possibility. It will be hard to drive us of the North into it. But we are quite ready to fight, if need be, for the maintenance of the authority of the Civil Government, (threatened by a prejudiced attack of the Southern revolutionists on Washington,) and, I hope, also for the freedom of the Territories. But I trust that fighting will not be required, and I believe that Mr. Lincoln will be quietly inaugurated on the 4th March. He has shown great courage and dignity in holding his tongue so completely since his election.

I could fill twenty sheets with the rumours, the fancies, and the theories of the day, but by the time my letter reaches you they would not be worth so much as last year's dead leaves. Of course there is no other news with us, for the intensity of the interest in public affairs lessens that of the other events, and diminishes the number of the events themselves. . . .

Emerson's new volume has been a great success here, and has met with far more favour than it seems to have done in England. Ten thousand copies of it have gone off here in spite of the political excitements. I do not wonder that the English critics do not like the book, for every year the imaginative and mystic element of the intellect, as it shows itself in literature, is getting more and more scouted at by them, — but I do not wonder at the abusive vulgarity of the article in the "Saturday Review." The book is the most Emersonian, good and bad, of all his books; certainly a book to do good to any one who knows how to think. But Emerson's books, as you know, are not nearly so good as himself. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, 5 March, 1861.

Is it not a great satisfaction to have the dignity and force of the government once more asserted? To feel that there are strong and honest hands to hold it, in place of the feeble and false ones which for four months past have let it fall?

Lincoln's Inaugural is just what might have been expected from him, and falls but little short of what might have been desired. It is manly and straightforward; it is strong and plain enough to afford what is so greatly needed, a base upon which the sentiments of the uncorrupted part of the Northern people can find firm ground; and from which their course of action can take direction. But what will the seceded States say about it—still more, what will they do? I incline to believe that they will not try violence, and that their course as an independent Confederacy is nearly at an end.

Congress could not have done less harm than it has done in passing the proposal for a Constitutional Amendment.[1] I am sorry that Lincoln should have volunteered any approbation of the proposal,—though I have little fear that the Amendment can be adopted by a sufficient number of States to make it

[1] The Thirteenth Amendment as proposed by Congress in 1861, and approved by Lincoln in his inaugural address, forbade the passage of any amendment empowering Congress "to abolish or interfere, within any State, with the domestic institutions thereof, including that of persons held to labor or service by the laws of said State." As adopted and declared in force before the end of 1865, the Thirteenth Amendment abolished slavery.

part of the Constitution. I do not wish to bind the future. I fully adopt the principle in regard to "domestic institutions" (what a euphuistic people about slavery we are!) of the Republican platform, but I do not want Congress bound never to pass laws to prevent the internal Slave Trade. Let Slavery alone in each state, — very well; but let us not promise never to try to stop Virginia from being nothing but a breeding ground of slaves.

The first act of this great play of Destruction of the Union has ended well. It seems now as if before the play were ended it would be generally found out that, as you and I have believed from the beginning, its proper name is, Destruction of the Slave Power.

When the history of American Slavery is written its open decline and fall will be dated from the day in which the South Carolina Declaration of Independence was signed. . . .

CHAPTER VI

WAR-TIME AND PUBLIC SERVICE

(1861–1868)

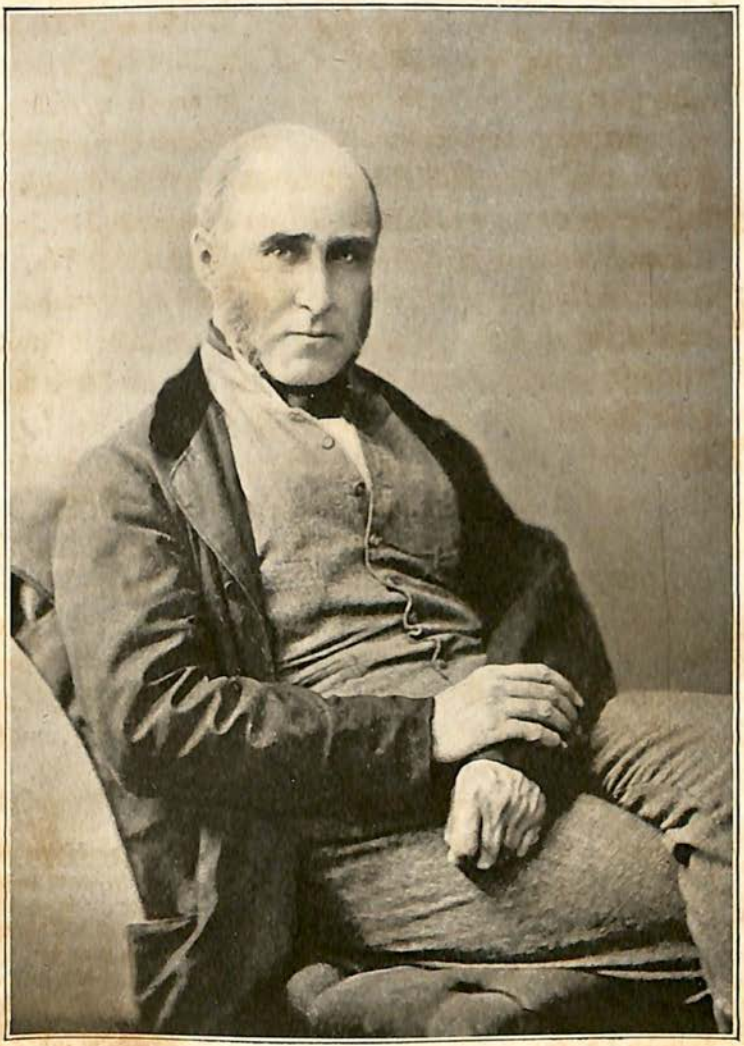
When disunion threatened the United States in 1861, the call to patriotic service took forms so manifold and met with responses so distinctive that the records of the time, as they contribute to American biography, are highly individualized and, in many instances, significant. Norton's letters show him a lover of his country, and a student of its problems; — but he was a man whose physical health necessarily restricted his service to that of mind and spirit. This service he rendered in full measure; especially through editorial labours for the New England Loyal Publication Society and for the "North American Review," of which, with Lowell as fellow-editor, he took charge before the end of 1863. His own pen he devoted early to the Union, in a pamphlet published in 1861 by the American Unitarian Association, "The Soldier of the Good Cause." The fervour of his feeling for this cause animates the pamphlet, from which a single sentence may be quoted: "Our war is in its real nature a religious war, and our soldiers must acknowledge themselves to be not only the soldiers of the United States, but the soldiers of the Lord."

But it was most of all through the work of the New England Loyal Publication Society that Norton

played an important part in the formation of public opinion. The origin and object of the Society are set forth in the biographies of John Murray Forbes, who planned the work and set it in motion, with an efficient executive committee, and Norton as editor. The actual nature of the work may best be described in Norton's own words, taken from a letter to Dr. John Simon,[1] written in 1871: "During our Civil War in America there was often need of enlightening and concentrating public opinion, and of giving it unity throughout our vast territory. To this end a few of us in Boston agreed to form a society called the 'Loyal Publication Society,' and having collected a comparatively small sum of money we set to work in the following way. We had printed at irregular intervals, generally once or twice a week, a Broadside containing selected or original newspaper articles, treating of such topics as for the moment had the most importance.[2] These Broadsides printed in good type, on good paper, and on only one side of the sheet, so as to

[1] (Sir) John Simon, C.B., 1816–1904 (knighted in 1887), sanitary reformer and pathologist; of the Royal College of Surgeons. Sir Richard Douglas Powell said of him: "He was a man gifted with true genius and inspired with a love of his kind. He will remain a noble figure in the medicine of the nineteenth century and will live in history as the apostle of Sanitation." (See *Dic. Nat. Biography*, 2d Supplement.) Through Ruskin, whose friend and physician Simon was, he became a close and lifelong friend of the Nortons. Writing in 1869 to Child, Norton said of Simon: "Every day that I see him I am struck with the solidity of his thought and the extent of his accomplishments. Greek tragedies, Dante's prose works, old ballads, Shakespeare, are all alike familiar to him. He is past fifty years old, has a fine head, (but not a handsome face) on a short thick-set body, and his expression is full of rare sensibility."

[2] At the most active period of the Society's work in 1864, two or three broadsides, in a regular edition of fifteen hundred copies, were issued every week.



SIR JOHN SIMON, 1868

be convenient to copy from, we sent regularly — without expense to the receivers — to the editors of loyal papers throughout the country. Our circulation was between one and two thousand copies. We remained strictly impersonal, we made no request for attention, but very soon our articles began to be copied very widely. Many local journals in the different states are published weekly, and their first pages are filled with selected articles. Many of them have but a small exchange list, and consequently find it difficult to fill their first page with good material. We offered it to them taken from a great variety of sources, and by occasional original articles we supplied country editors with 'editorials.' They knew that their readers mostly saw but one paper, and would not discover their cribbing. In this way for three years we did a good deal of the editing of several hundred journals, — and some of the articles to which we gave circulation must have been read by not less than a million of people. Of the influence and effect of this quiet and inconspicuous work there could be no doubt. I was editor of the Broadsides, and had the general management entirely in my hands, and had the means of ascertaining the extent to which our work was successful."

Of the "North American Review," Lowell, soon after he and Norton undertook its editorship, wrote to Motley (July 28, 1864): "It wanted three chief elements to be successful. It was n't thoroughly, that is, thick-and-thinly loyal, it was n't lively, and it had no particular opinions on any particular subject." With

Norton as the active editor of the quarterly, and Lowell as a constant contributor of literary and political essays, the two friends set about the removal of these faults. The volumes for which they were responsible, for a few years from 1864, cannot be said to strike one of a later generation as "lively," but they were loyal and definite in their position on public matters. Norton himself contributed to the January number of 1864 a long paper, "Immorality in Politics," devoted in a large measure to emphatic protests against Bishop Hopkins's vindication of slavery on Scriptural grounds. In this number also appeared Lowell's article, "The President's Policy," an estimate of public sentiment which Mr. Rhodes declares "remarkable in that the years have demonstrated its exactness." To the July number Norton contributed an article, "Our Soldiers," filled with instances of heroism drawn from recent memorials of men who had given their lives to the Union cause. In January of 1865 his paper, "Abraham Lincoln," was published, and in October another article from his pen, "American Political Ideals." There is ample evidence that, in the double capacity of editor and writer, he rendered abundant service in the task defined in Lowell's letter to Motley.

On May 21, 1862, after a brief engagement, Norton's marriage to Susan Ridley Sedgwick, the eldest daughter of Theodore Sedgwick,[1] of Stockbridge and New York, took place. Her mother, Sara Ashburner, born

[1] The third of the name: — son of Theodore Sedgwick, of Stockbridge, grandson of Theodore Sedgwick, member of Congress (1789–1796), Speaker of the House (1799–1801), Justice of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts (1802–1813).

MRS. CHARLES ELIOT NORTON
From a crayon portrait by Rowse, 1861

in India, of English parents, had come as a girl with her father, Luke Ashburner, and her brothers and sisters, to America, where they settled in Stockbridge; there she had met and married Theodore Sedgwick, and there in 1856 she died. Her husband survived her only three years, and on his death, his four young children were devotedly cared for by their two English aunts, Anne and Grace Ashburner. In 1860 they came from Stockbridge to live in Cambridge, to be near Susan Sedgwick's only brother, Arthur, who had entered Harvard College. Friendship between the Norton and Sedgwick families already existed, and many occasions for meeting led with a happy inevitableness to Norton's engagement. The intimacy thus begun between the household at Shady Hill and that of the Sedgwicks and Ashburners developed, as years went on, into the closest relations of mutual affection and dependence.

Norton, when he married, was thirty-five years old; his wife was twenty-four. A portion of the house at Shady Hill was set apart for them, and thenceforward Norton's birthplace became even more dear to him. In dealing with these years and with what his marriage meant to him, we may well quote his own words from the Preface of "Letters of John Ruskin to Charles Eliot Norton": "In spite of the poets, in spite of modern usage, in spite of Ruskin's own example, I hold with those who believe that there are sanctities of love and life to be kept in privacy inviolate."

In the first winter of his married life he gave a course of lectures in the Lowell Institute, on the "Character-

istics of the Twelfth Century," an undertaking which links itself closely with what was to become the chief work of his life. Neither his most happy and fortunate marriage, with those engrossments which might naturally have attended it, nor his active concern in the present, crowded with vital issues, interrupted his studies of the past: and withal the offices of friendship did not suffer.

Of all these relationships, forming an element of the first importance in Norton's life, there was scarcely one in which long intercourse and essential sympathy were more closely joined than in the friendship with George William Curtis. The biography of Curtis, by Mr. Edward Cary, in the "American Men of Letters" series, showed Norton to be the friend to whom he wrote most constantly and frankly. In Norton's voluminous correspondence there is no single collection of letters, excepting only those to Lowell, in which the course of his life — for forty-two years — can be so intimately followed as in the letters to Curtis. The gifts and achievements of this best of friends were preëminently of the sort to win and hold the admiring sympathy of Norton. The love of letters, the skilful practice of the art of writing, the keen interest in public matters, above all the independence of political thought and action; and the charm of personality expressing itself as clearly in the spoken as in the written word, were attributes upon which a friendship after Norton's own heart could be based. The beginnings of this friendship in Paris in 1850 have already been seen, and letters of 1860 and 1861 have been quoted.

In 1861, Curtis was only thirty-seven years old, Norton thirty-five. Curtis had written his Howadji books, "Lotus-Eating," "The Potiphar Papers," and "Prue and I." His "Works," had been collected in five uniform volumes, and his recognized place in America was among the popular writers of the day. His reputation as a political writer was still largely to be made. To both these young men, as to many others who gave what they could to the service of the nation, the Civil War came as a great quickening and revealing power. There is a special interest, therefore, in the correspondence between the young student writing from Cambridge and Newport, to his friend in New York, — who in 1863 became the political editor of "Harper's Weekly," — and the letters to Curtis must take an important place in the following pages.

Although these letters deal chiefly with the public aspects of the war, it should be remembered that to Curtis, — with a brother and two brothers-in-law, Robert Gould Shaw and Charles Russell Lowell, in the army, all giving their heroic lives to the cause, — and to Norton, touched more nearly through friends than through kinsmen, a full sense of the intimate meaning of war was inevitable. Yet the other interests of life, overshadowed though they were by what was passing in the South, continued their course.

Like Lowell, Curtis was often with the Nortons at Shady Hill or Newport: — friends and interests were held in common in that genial atmosphere; but the centre of this brotherhood was the Nortons' household.

In Norton's view of the progress of the war there are constant evidences of the deeply patriotic faith and hope that were in him. The letters contain intimations, for example, of the work he was doing through the New England Loyal Publication Society. Most noticeable of all, and typical of the Northern element which he represented, are the signs of the gradual change in his view of Lincoln. Those who shared Norton's general political attitude had all begun by doubting. In November, 1862, Norton is found writing: "I am very much afraid that a domestic cat will not answer when one wants a Bengal tiger." In December of the next year, he wrote of Lincoln: "I conceive his character to be on the whole the great net gain from the war."

Norton's letters to Clough — who was now mortally ill, and died in Florence in November, 1861 — continue into this period; and one of them, written just before the fall of Fort Sumter, presents the aspect of affairs on the very eve of war.

To A. H. Clough

SHADY HILL, April 10, 1861.

. . . Truly this is a time when one may well be glad to be on the spot to study our public affairs. Our troubles do not appear to be coming to a speedy close, and I do not know that there has been a moment since their beginning in November, of greater interest than the present. A collision between the forces of the United States and those of the Confederates seems imminent.

The new Administration in coming into power on the 4th March found every branch of the public service in a state of disorganization. The treasury was empty, the fleet scattered, the little army so posted that it could not at once be brought to the points where it was needed. Everywhere was confusion, uncertainty of counsel, and weakness, the result of the treacherous and imbecile course of Buchanan and his Cabinet. For weeks Mr. Lincoln and his new Cabinet were necessarily engaged in getting things into working order. They could undertake no vigorous measures and make no display of energy; but they were quietly and actively collecting their forces. The newspapers, puzzled by the delay, and baffled by a secrecy in the Administration to which they had long been unaccustomed, began to complain that the affairs of state were no better conducted than under the previous régime, that the Cabinet had no policy, that the country was drifting to ruin. But last week the Government showed its hand, and it became plain that it had waited only to gather strength to act, that it had a definite policy, and that the policy was a manly and straightforward one. Within the past four or five days a fleet has sailed from New York, with large supplies of material and provisions, and a considerable force of soldiers. Not yet does the public *know* its destination, but there are three directions which it will take according to circumstances. In the first place, Fort Sumter *is to be provisioned.* This will be done by sending in an unarmed vessel to the fort while the vessels of war wait outside the harbour. If she be

fired upon, they will enter and protect her, at whatever cost. I fear that we may hear to-morrow that the South Carolinians have been mad enough to begin the attack. After provisioning Fort Sumter, the next object is to relieve Fort Pickens in Florida which is menaced by a large body of Southern troops. Men and provisions can be thrown into this fort from the water, but an attack is threatened if this is done. The third object is to garrison the frontier posts on the Texas borders, to defend the Texans against Indians and Mexicans, and to cut off the Confederates from making a descent upon Mexico. This is a step of prime importance. Secession is not a valid fact so long as the boundaries of the States declaring themselves seceded are defended by United States troops.

More vessels will sail this week from Boston and New York. The work the Administration has undertaken will be done. Of course we are waiting with most painful anxiety the news from the South. It seems now as if the leaders of the Revolution were determined to push it to the bloodiest issue. Governor Pickens of South Carolina has been informed that Fort Sumter would be provisioned, and that the Government desired to do it peaceably; the answer from him was the ordering out of the reserves, the getting the batteries ready for an attack on Fort Sumter, and the making all the preparations for a fight. One cannot but pity the poor Southern troops; they are brave, no doubt, and are certainly full of zeal for battle, but hardly one of them has ever seen a shot fired, none of them are regular soldiers, many of them are men whose

pursuits have hitherto been peaceful, and many belong to the most cultivated and best Southern families. Think of a shell bursting in the ranks of men like these, fighting for such a cause as that for which they have engaged!

I wish I could read you some of the extremely interesting letters which Jane has received this winter from her friend, Miss Middleton, of Charleston. They have given us a most vivid view of the state of feeling there, and of the misery which war, which a single battle, would produce. But the people there are truly demented.

How is it all to end? I believe, somehow for good. But the commercial spirit is very strong with us at the North, and the corruption of long prosperity very manifest. We have need of a different temper from that which prevails, before we can reap much good from our present troubles.

Meanwhile everything is astonishingly quiet here. No one travelling in New England would imagine that such a revolution was going on in any part of the country. There is less business done than common, but there is no suffering; no labourers are turned out of employment; life everywhere runs on in its common course. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, 29 April, 1861.

I wish we could have a long talk together. Your last note found its answer in my heart. Everything is going on well here. The feeling that stirs the people is

no outburst of transient passion, but is as deep as it is strong. I believe it will last till the work is done. Of course we must look for some reaction, — but I have no fear that it will bear any proportion to the force of the present current.

It seems to me to be pretty much settled by this unanimity of action at the North that we are not to have a divided Union. I almost regret this result, for I wish that the Southern States could have the opportunity of making a practical experiment of their system as a separate organization, and I fear lest when the time of settlement comes the weakness of the North may begin to show itself again in unmanly compliances.

But our chief danger at the present moment is lest the prevailing excitement of the people should overbear the wiser, slower, and more far-sighted counsels of Mr. Seward, — for it is he who more than any one else has the calmness and the prudence which are most requisite in this emergency. I am afraid that he is not well supported in the Cabinet, and I more than ever wish that he could have been our President. I am not satisfied that Mr. Lincoln is the right man for the place at this time.

Sumner dined with our Club on Saturday.[1] He did not make a good impression on me by his talk. He is very bitter against Seward; he expressed a great want of confidence in Scott, thinking him feeble and too much of a politician to be a good general; he doubts the honour and the good service of Major Anderson. There is

[1] The Saturday Club of Boston.

but one man in the country in whom he has entire confidence, and in him his confidence is overweening.

After Sumner had gone Mr. Adams [1] came in and talked in a very different and far more statesmanlike way. His opinions are worthy of confidence. I think he is not thoroughly pleased with the President or the Cabinet, — but in him Mr. Seward has a strong ally.

You see that Caleb Cushing has offered his services to Governor Andrew. I understand that two notes passed on each side, — one a formal tender from Cushing of his services, which the Governor replied to with equal formality, stating that there is no position in the Massachusetts army which he can fill. Cushing's first letter was accompanied by another private one in which he offered himself to fill any position and expressed some of his sentiments on the occasion. To this Andrew answers that in his opinion Mr. Cushing does not possess the confidence of the community in such measure as to authorize him — the Governor — to place him in any position of responsibility, and that, even if this were not the case, Mr. Cushing does not possess his personal confidence to a degree which would warrant him in accepting his services. This is excellent. It is no more than Cushing deserves. Neither the people nor the Governor have forgotten, and they will never forgive, his speeches last November or December, or his previous course. . . .[2]

[1] Charles Francis Adams was appointed minister to England, March 20, 1861.

[2] Cushing had presided at the Democratic National Convention which nominated Breckinridge to run against Lincoln.

To A. H. Clough

SHADY HILL, 27 May, 1861.

. . . My last letter to you was written a day or two before the fall of Fort Sumter. Since then I have wished over and over again that you were here, that you might have seen and taken part in the magnificent popular movement of these days.

As events have turned out nothing could have been more fortunate than the bombardment of the fort, and the lowering of the national flag before the force of a rebellious State. The guns of South Carolina battered down a great deal more than the walls of the fort, — party divisions and prejudices, personal interests, private or social differences, all fell before them. The whole Northern people was heartily united, and there was but one feeling and one will among them all. It was not that their passions were aroused, or that they were seized with the sudden contagion of a short-lived popular excitement, — but all their self-respect, their intelligent and conservative love of order, government, and law, all their instinctive love of liberty, and their sense of responsibility for the safety of the blessings of freedom and of popular government, were stirred to their very depth. The question at issue was put so plainly by the Charleston guns that no man in the Free States could hesitate as to the answer. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, 16 June, 1861.

. . . Here at home we are all well, — and leading such tranquil lives that the contrast between them

and the labours, anxieties, and sorrows of the war, is brought very strikingly home to our hearts. I know you must have felt very deeply the death of Theodore Winthrop. The loss of such men as he makes us feel how heavy a price the country has to pay for the support of the principles that are at stake. It is sad that he should have fallen so early in the struggle, and in such fulness of life. But no lover of his country, of liberty or of peace, would desire to change the manner of his death. Few men in our days have been happy enough to be called to die for a principle, or for their country's sake. There is real glory and joy in dying while doing good service in this war.

I am told that Winthrop's article, which is to appear in the "Atlantic" this week is as full of spirit and manliness as the one that came out last month. But with what a solemn commentary will it be read.

Our regiments enlisted for the war are going off one after another. The best of them is Gordon's,[1] — so called from its colonel who is a West Pointer. It is officered throughout by gentlemen, and its ranks are full of fine fellows. But, I forget, you know all about it, and your hearts will follow it and go with it wherever it goes. . . .

To J. R. Lowell

NEWPORT, 21 July, 1861.

DEAREST JAMES, — . . . Newport is very pleasant, or perhaps I should better say, would be very pleasant

[1] The Second Mass. Infantry, under Col. George H. Gordon.

were it not so far from you! It is quieter than usual this year, and the gay people are less extravagant in their display. As for the sea and the sky nothing new is to be said of them, — they are the same as ever. The hearts of the town's people are in the war. Nearly two hundred Newporters have gone to it, and Colonel Burnside is a Newport man. To-day everyone is anxious about the expected battle,— for the Newport troops are in the advance. I heard a story of the departure of the company which pleased me. It may not be literally correct, but this is what was told me. When Governor Sprague received from Washington the answer that his offer of a regiment was accepted, he at once sent out his requisitions to the captains of the various companies to assemble with their commands at Providence. The requisition reached Newport at six in the morning. Captain Tew, a fisherman, sent word to Providence that he would be there at two o'clock with fifty men. The news ran through the town, and when the company marched down to the boat there were not fifty but one hundred and fifty men in the ranks. Mr. Thayer of the Orthodox Church made a prayer upon the wharf; the whole town was there, silent and uncovered, but when the boat started the cheers broke out one after another. The company went without a flag, and it was resolved to send one to them. In a day or two it was made and sent to Providence, and presented with a speech and the usual formalities. When Captain Tew took it he said, "I thank you for this flag. I don't know how to make a speech. Let us pray." So he made a prayer ending with words like these, "If we are successful, give

us, O Lord, the spirit of moderation; if we be beaten, help us to stand firm unto death."

And these are the men who are called names by the Southerners; who are supposed to be marching with Booty and Beauty on their banners; whom "la jeunesse dorée" of Virginia and South Carolina would hardly touch with the points of their swords!

How well our Massachusetts First have done! It is a fine thing that Massachusetts men should again be foremost in the post of danger, and that Massachusetts blood should be the first shed in the advance of this great army of Freedom. Can we be too glad to belong to New England, to be her children, and to be living in these days?

Surely you will write some poem to give expression to the feeling and thought which is in the souls of the people. You wrote "Italy — 1859"! do write "America — 1861." . . .

To G. W. Curtis

NEWPORT, 26 July, 1861.

. . . From the first I have looked on our defeat [1] in Virginia as a hard lesson, not as a disaster to be greatly regretted. It has taught us much. Instead of weakening confidence in our troops, the fight of last Sunday, in spite of its issue, will strengthen their faith in themselves. And in its effect on the public sentiment of the North it will be like the fall of Sumter. Everything that makes the attainment of our object in fighting more difficult, makes it at the same time more certain.

[1] At Bull Run.

Had we marched only to easy victory we might have had but half a triumph: *now* the triumph of our cause is likely to be complete. Nothing tears veils like cannon-shot, and the dullest eyes are beginning to see the real cause and the true remedy of our troubles. The emancipation of Virginia from slavery was finally settled, I think, last Sunday.

The New York papers, always excepting the "Evening Post," go from bad to worse, the "Tribune" leading the rest. Fortunately none of them have much effect on public opinion, and they are losing most of what they may hitherto have possessed. "Il y a quelqu'un qui a plus d'esprit que M. de Voltaire: c'est tout le monde." The downfall of the fourth estate need not be wept over. . . .

To Mrs. Gaskell

NEWPORT, 12 August, 1861.

MY DEAR MRS. GASKELL, — . . . Your note came to me just at the time of a great sorrow in the sudden and terrible death of our dear friend Mrs. Longfellow. You have no doubt seen some notice of it. The fatal accident took place on one of our hot summer days in July. It was in the afternoon. She was with her two youngest little girls in the library, and having just cut the hair of one of them she was amusing them by sealing up some packets of the pretty curls. By some unexplained accident one of the wax tapers she was using set fire to her dress. It was of the lightest muslin, and the flame almost instantly spread beyond her power to extinguish it. Her first thought was to save her little girls from

harm, and she fled from them into her husband's study, where he was lying asleep on a sofa. Hearing her call to him he sprang up, seized a rug from the floor, wrapped it round her and tried in vain to put out the fire. Before he could succeed the flames had done their work. She was taken upstairs, and the physicians were very soon with her. There was nothing to be done but to alleviate her suffering which for an hour or two was intense. She was rendered unconscious by ether, — and when its use was discontinued the suffering was over and did not return. Through the night she was perfectly calm, patient and gentle, all the lovely sweetness and elevation of her character showing itself in her looks and words. In the morning she lost consciousness and about eleven o'clock she died. Poor Longfellow had been very severely burned in trying to put out the flames, and for several days was in a state of great physical suffering and nervous prostration. I have never known any domestic calamity so sad and tragic as this. Of all happy homes theirs was in many respects the happiest. It was rich and delightful not only in outward prosperity but in intimate blessings. Those who loved them could not wish for them anything better than they had, for their happiness satisfied even the imagination.

Mrs. Longfellow was very beautiful, and her beauty was but the type of the loveliness and nobility of her character. She was a person whom everyone admired, and whom those who knew her well enough to love loved very deeply. There is nothing in her life that is not delightful to remember. There was no pause and no decline in her. It was but a very few days before her

death that Lowell and I, as we came out from a morning party where we had met her, agreed that she had never been more beautiful or more charming. She had a fine stateliness and graciousness of manner. Reserved in expression, but always sweet and kind, it was only those who knew her well who knew how quick and deep and true her sympathies were, how poetic was her temperament, how pure and elevated her thoughts. Longfellow was worthy of such a wife.

Ever since I was a very little boy he has been one of our nearest friends, and for many years our lives have been closely connected with theirs. Their home is a little more than a mile from ours, but in affection they have been our nearest neighbours. It was a touching coincidence that her funeral took place on the eighteenth anniversary of her wedding day. Such a short time as it seemed! Such a happy time as it had been!

The next week we came to Newport, and here we have been living for the last four weeks very quietly, — save that I went to Cambridge a fortnight ago to see Longfellow. He was still confined to his bed, but his hands, which had been most badly burned, were becoming serviceable once more; and he was suffering more from feebleness than from pain. I have never seen any one who bore a great sorrow in a more simple and noble way. But he is very desolate, — and, however manfully and religiously he may bear up, his life must hereafter be desolate. I hope he may find happiness in his children; his three little girls are very dear and charming, and his two boys are just growing into young-manhood.

I have never known a private sorrow affect the community as this did. It went to the heart of every person, — and for a time even the pressing interest of our public affairs seemed remote. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

NEWPORT, 24 August, 1861.

. . . I do not agree with you that the war is likely to be short. Its issue may soon become certain, but it will be long before we can lay down our arms. Nor am I ready yet to share in any gloomy prognostications. I believe the people will save the country and the government in spite of all the weakness and mismanagement and corruption at Washington. Nor am I afraid of the effect of another defeat, — if another should come. It will indeed bring to the surface an immense show of cowardice, and meanness; but we have no right yet to believe that the temper of our people is so low that it will not rise with the trial and [*sic*] of calamity. I bate nothing of heart or hope, and I grieve to think that you should ever feel out of heart or despondent. We have not yet more than begun to rouse ourselves; we are just bracing to the work; but we are setting to it at last in earnest.

The practical matter to be attended to at this moment seems to me to be the change in the Cabinet. A change *must* be made, — and it will be made, if not by the pressure now brought to bear, then by a popular revolution. We shall have public meetings of a kind to enforce their resolves in the course of a few days, if Cameron, Welles and Smith are not removed, or the

best reason given for retaining them. Mr. Seward ought to understand that it is not safe for him that they should any longer remain in the Cabinet. If another reverse were to come and they still there, the whole Cabinet would have to go; — and then let Mr. Lincoln himself look out for a Committee of Safety. . . .

Let me hear from you again soon, — and above all do not begin to doubt our final success.

If the fortunes of war go against us, if all our domestic scoundrels give aid to the cause of the rebels, — we still shall not fail, and the issue will be even better than our hopes.

Most affectionately Yours,

CHARLES E. N.

To G. W. Curtis

NEWPORT, 2 October, 1861.

. . . I sent you yesterday a copy of de Vere's last volume of poems. There are some very charming things in it. He has genuine poetic sensibility, and with age he gains power of expression and depth of thought. In everything he writes he shows the refinement of his taste, the delicacy of his feeling, and his strong religious sentiment. He is greatly pleased with any expression of appreciation from America, and if you have a fit opportunity I wish you would say something of this volume in print. And if you should do so, please be sure to tell me, (for I do not always see "Harper's Monthly" and "Weekly"), that I may send it to him.

De Vere has taken from the beginning the most intelligent and sympathetic view of our great contest. I read you, I think, one of his letters about it; and in later letters he has expressed his convictions still more fully and warmly. Nor is this volume without the marks of his hearty interest in our struggle.

I have great faith in Frémont. But how painfully little we know! and how ungenerously that little is used against Frémont by the public generally in forming their opinion of his course! I earnestly hope that he may soon have a success which shall win back to him the popular confidence. Events prove Lincoln's modifications of his proclamation even more unfortunate than it at first seemed, — and even at first it seemed bad enough. In a fight so desperate as that which is now being waged in Missouri we have need of all our arms, — and Lincoln has compelled us to throw aside the most effective of them all, — he has spiked our gun of longest range. Have I before quoted to you Milton's sentence about those "who coming in the course of these affairs to have their share in great actions above the form of law or custom . . . dispute precedents, forms, circumstances when the commonwealth nigh perishes for want of deeds in substance, done with just and faithful expedition?" "To these," as he says, 'I wish better instruction, and virtue equal to their calling."

It is an unexampled experience that we are having now, and a striking development of the democratic principle, — of great historic deeds being accomplished, and moral principles working out their results, with-

out one great man to do the deeds or to manifest the principle in himself.

The fight in Kentucky seems to me one of the most important phases in the war. Her conduct for the past year has been so mean that she deserves the suffering that has come upon her; but in her borders we have now got slave-holders arrayed against slave-holders, and between them they will kill slavery in her limits. I hope you are wrong in thinking that we shall lose her, — though, if we do, I shall not much grieve, believing that every reverse of ours but makes our final success more certain, and gives to it a solid reality which would not be the result of an easy triumph. . . .

To J. R. Lowell

NEWPORT, 17 October, 1861.

Your poem[1] is indeed very fine. I cannot tell yet critically why, or why it touches my heart, or why I think it among the best poems you have written, and worthy in every way of yourself. By and bye I will study it as a critic, but I know now that it is full of imagination, and of power. It is a poem that no one can read with indifference. I am very glad you have written it, — and I thank you for it, and for the note which preceded it. We all agree in our estimate of this poem, and send best love to you.

I hope you have recovered from it, — but I do not

[1] In sending a copy of "The Washers of the Shroud" to Norton, Lowell wrote, October 12, 1861: "Leigh Hunt speaks somewhere of our writing things for particular people, and wondering as we write if such or such a one will like it. Just so I thought of you, *after* I had written — for while I was writing it I was wholly absorbed."

wonder that you felt tired after writing it, hurrying it through in two days. You have not written enough poetry of late to be in good order for it, — and this is another reason for keeping your hand in now that you have begun again.

Here is an extract from a letter I had from Mr. Marsh[1] the other day, the whole of which I will read you next week when we come home. — "I am very glad Lowell is out of the 'Atlantic.' I don't know any man the next ten years of whose life, all things considered, ought to be worth so much as Lowell's coming decade, — and I hope his path may be cleared of all encumbrances." I hope so, too, dearest old fellow, with all my heart, for the same reasons, and for better ones than those that Marsh has for his wish. I wish and I hope to make you believe that your duty to yourself and to us is not to be fulfilled in the recitation room. I do not doubt that you do good there, and that your influence is worth much, — but your true classes are not to be found in any college room; there are a thousand men who can teach Italian to Seniors and Spanish to Juniors, but there is only one man who can do what the world outside the College walls has a right (a right established by what he has already done,) to expect of my dear J. R. L.

This is a mere "thank you" for your poem. You need have no misgiving about the poem. Trust me in this. It *is* beautiful. . . .

[1] George P. Marsh, philologist and diplomat, United States Minister to Italy, 1861–1882.

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, 5 December; Thursday evening.

... We are very serious over the President's Message. We think it very poor in style, manner and thought, — very wanting in pith, and exhibiting a mournful deficiency of strong feeling and of wise forecast in the President. This "no policy" system in regard to the conduct of the war and the treatment of the slavery question is extremely dangerous, and must at the best produce very unfortunate divisions of opinion and of action among the people; — it is truly a very sad thing to see each successive opportunity for great, decisive, *right* counsels thus thrown away and worse than lost. The chances of true success for us are diminishing with alarming rapidity. The Sibyl has burned three, — six, — seven — of her books. How many has she left to offer us? And shall we not have to pay more than we can get, for what are left? ...

The following passage from a letter to Lowell preserves an impression made by New York more than fifty years ago, and affords evidence of the good counsel that Norton was giving with reference to Lowell's most important contribution to the political thought of the period — in the writing of the second series of "Biglow Papers." In the February (1862) number of the "Atlantic" "Mason and Slidell: A Yankee Idyll" was printed. Apparently upon Norton's advice, Birdofredum Sawin's Letter to Mr. Hosea Biglow appeared in the March number.

To J. R. Lowell

THE ALBEMARLE, NEW YORK, December 19, 1861.

... This is a wonderful city. It has greatly changed since you and I were here eighteen years ago. There is a special fitness in the first syllable of its name, for it is essentially New, and seems likely always to remain so. It is all of the New World, and what Villemain says of Joinville is true in another sense of the impression that a stranger receives from New York "On dirait que les objets sont nés dans le monde le jour où il les a vus." The only old things here are yesterday's newspapers. People do not seem to live here, — they pass the nights and spend the days in the city, — that is all. The persons whom I meet in the street do not have, to my eyes, the air of belonging here, or of being at home. They look restless, and even the children have tired faces as if they had been seeing sights too long.

The New Yorkers have got Aladdin's lamp, and build palaces in a night. The city is gay, entertaining, full of costly things, — but its lavish spending does not result in magnificence, it is showy rather than fine, and its houses and churches and shops and carriages are expensive rather than beautiful. Architecture is not practised as a fine art, it is known here only as a name for the building trade.

Boston is farther off than it used to be from New York. We are provincials, with a very little city of our own. This is really metropolitan, and has great advantages. A few years hence and Boston will be a

place of the past, with a good history no doubt, but New York will be alive. It seems to be getting what Paris has so much of, — a confidence in the immortality of the present moment. It does not care for past or future.

My windows look out on the junction of Broadway and Fifth Avenue, and there is not a livelier place in the world.

The news from England, I trust, is not so bad as it seems. The manner in which the country has received it is most satisfactory, — and there is apparently no reason to fear war as the result of any popular excitement here, or of any want of temper or discretion on the part of the Administration. It is a fortunate thing for us that Seward has regained so much of the public confidence. He will feel himself strong enough not to be passionate or violent. I cannot believe that the English ministry mean war, — if they do they will get it and its consequences.

How good the new number of the "Atlantic" is! I have read and re-read your letters in it, always with a fuller sense of the overflowing humour, wit and cleverness of them. You are as young, my boy, as you were in the old time. It seems to me indeed (you will take what I say for what it is worth, and of this you are a better judge than I am), that there is some risk from the very abundance of your power lest the popularity and effect of this new series of the "Biglow Papers" should not be as great as it ought to be. This letter of B. Sawin's is too full, and contains too much. I know that the necessity of the case forced you into details in

order to place your characters on the stage in an intelligible way. But I am afraid that the public will be impatient of detail, and will complain of divided interest. It was this that prevented common readers from appreciating the delightful fun and humour of "Our Own." The truth is that for popularity — that is, for wide, genuine, national popularity — there is need of unity of effect. One blow must be struck, not ten. Moreover our people are more in earnest now than they ever have been before, they are not in the vein for being amused by the most humorous touches of satire unless there be a simple, perfectly direct moral underneath. The conclusion to which I want to come is this, — that you must interrupt the series of Birdofredum's letters, by some shorter pieces of Hosea's own, the shorter the better if so be that they give expression and form to any one of the popular emotions or sentiments of the moment; — and more than this, that you should make them as lyrical and as strong as possible, binding the verses together with a taking refrain. The pieces in the old "Biglow Papers" that have become immortal are the lyrics; — the John P. Robinson; the Gen. Cass says some one's an ass; the Apostles rigged out in their swallow-tail coats, and so on.

Am I right? I believe so. And if I am, I am sure that you can do what I think should be done. You have a fine chance (*me judice*) at this moment to put the popular feeling toward England into verse which shall ring from one end of the country to the other. Do let Hosea do it, and send it with one of his brief

old-fashioned letters to the publishers for the next number, — and keep back Birdofredum till March. If you hit the nail of the minute such a ringing blow on the head as you can hit it, all the people will cheer and laugh, and throw up their hats in your honour. I am so proud of you, and love you so well that I not only want you to do the best for the country but am sure that you can do it. And love gives me the precious right to write thus freely to you. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, 31 December, 1861.

. . . Lowell has been spending the evening with us, and brought up to read to us his new Biglow Paper. It is one of the best things that he ever did, — it is a true Yankee pastoral and lyric; — not another letter of B. Sawin, but a poem or rather two poems of Hosea's own, — the first a dialogue between Concord Bridge and Bunker Hill monument, — the last a lyric about Jonathan and John, with the most spirited refrain. I am sure that you will be as delighted with it as I am. There is no doubt but that it will touch the popular heart.

I entirely agree with you as to the masterly manner in which Seward has treated the Trent case. If his paper has too much the character of a legal plea for strict diplomatic usage, it is to be remembered that it is to be in reality addressed to the American people and not to Lord Lyons. Shall we yet have to fight England? With all my heart I hope not, — but if need be, I am ready. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, Sunday, 9 February, 1862.

... Jane and I went to hear Frederic Douglass. It was a sad though interesting performance. He said very little to the purpose, and nothing that was of worth as helping toward clearer conclusions in regard to the future of the black race in America. There was a want of earnestness and true feeling in his speech. It was discursive, shallow, personal, and though he said some clever things and displayed some power of humorous irony, it was on the whole a melancholy exhibition, for neither the circumstances of the time, nor the immeasurable importance of the topic were enough to inspire him with wise or sincere counsel. I could not but think how far he was from such honesty of purpose and depth of feeling as were in John Brown's heart. There were several eloquent and well meant passages in his lecture, but most of it was crude and artificial. We could not but come away disappointed and even disheartened.

How good the news is from Tennessee![1] We have waited so long for success that we may well be glad when it comes. I trust that this is a blow to be followed up....

To G. W. Curtis

Monday evening, 3 March, 1862.

... On the day you left us I had a long and most entertaining talk from Emerson about his experiences

[1] Fort Henry had just been taken, and Fort Donelson was about to fall.

in Washington. Two things he said were especially striking. "When you go southward from New York you leave public opinion behind you. There is no such thing known in Washington." — "It consoles a Massachusetts man to find how large is the number of egotists in Washington. Every second man thinks the affairs of the country depend upon him." He reported a good saying of Stanton, when the difficulty of making an advance on account of the state of the roads was spoken of, — "Oh," said he, "the difficulty is not from the mud in the roads, but the mud in the hearts of the Generals."

Emerson said that Seward was very strong in his expressions concerning the incapacity and want of spirit of Congress, — and that Sherman and Colfax confirmed what Seward said, ascribing much of the manifest weakness to "Border State" influence.

And much more. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, 8 March, 1862.

As I sit down to thank you for the note that came to me this morning, Jane is reading it aloud to Longfellow, and interrupts me to ask explanations. All you say is very interesting. But can I quite agree with you in confidence in Mr. Lincoln's instincts? His message on Emancipation[1] is a most important step; but could anything be more feebly put, or more inefficiently written? His style is worse than ever; and though a

[1] The special message urging "gradual abolishment of slavery" was sent to Congress March 6.

bad style is not always a mark of bad thought, — it is at least a proof that thought is not as clear as it ought to be.

How time brings about its revenges! I think the most striking incident of the war is the march of our men into Charleston singing the John Brown psalm, "His soul is marching on."

As for Lincoln's suggestions, I am sure that good will come of them. They will at least serve to divide opinion in the Border States. But I see many practical objections to his plan; and I doubt if any State meets his propositions with corresponding action.

The "Tribune" is politic in its burst of ardour. Let us make out the message to be more than it is, — and bring the President up to our view of it. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, 19 March, 1862.

. . . I am not as critical as Iago, but I do not like McClellan's address to his troops. It is too French in style and idiom. He "loves his men like a father"? "A magnificent army"? "God smiles upon us." How does he know? And "victory attends us"? This last phrase is plainly a mistranslation from the French "La Victoire nous attend," — which means, what our General ought to have said, Victory *awaits* us.

But I am more than content with our progress. Wendell Phillips in Washington! The new article of War! The slaves running away in Virginia! Frémont re-instated in command! Freedom cannot take any backward steps — and it looks as if she would soon

begin to move forward with faster and more confident steps than heretofore.

What a fine fight that was in Hampton Roads! Honour to the men of the Cumberland. I heard a most interesting and deeply moving account of the incidents of the fight and the sinking from Dr. Martin, the surgeon of the ship.

And how splendidly the Monitor was managed! . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL
Thursday evening, 31 July, 1862.

. . . The weather is very beautiful; — such a sunshiny, showery, green, shady, summer as it is! But we have no days finer than the 17th. *That* was fine every way. Your Oration[1] lasts in the minds of men. Its praises come to me from all sides. Last Saturday at the Club there was a general expression of hearty admiration of it which would have pleased you to hear. Every one who had heard it said it was one of the most effective pieces of oratory that had been heard here by this generation, and that its sentiment and doctrine were as noble as your eloquence. Even the "conservatives" give in to its power. "Detestable opinions, Sir, but overwhelming eloquence."

Here we have given up McClellan as a general, and have renewed our original faith in Stanton. It seems to me certain that the President and the Secretary of War have not interfered with McClellan's plans, but have done everything to forward them. I fear the

[1] The Phi Beta Kappa Oration at Harvard.

President is not yet quite conscious of the spirit of the people, and aware of the needs of the time. I have no doubt of his good intention, but I doubt if his soul is open to the heats of enthusiasm for a great principle, or his will quick and resolute enough for a great emergency. I do not believe in any palliations at present. Will Lincoln be master of the opportunities, or will they escape him? Is he great enough for the time?

Do you think the army[1] on the James River is safe? If it is forced to surrender, I think the people generally would be excited to make the cause good rather than depressed by the calamity. It looks to me as if Emancipation might come very soon in Kentucky. But what a pity that the President should not have issued a more distinct and telling Proclamation! I think this a great misfortune. However, it is not a mere piece of commonplace faith that everything is best, when I say I believe that the issue of the war will be as we desire. What a lot of capital *I's* I have put into this note! . . .

To Miss Gaskell

SHADY HILL, CAMBRIDGE, 30 August, 1862.

MY DEAR MISS META, — . . . Spite of all mismanagement, and spite of all reverses, our cause is, I believe, advancing. The autumn months show great military activity; and the people throughout the North are more and more resolved to accomplish the work they have to do. The spirit, the patience, the energy, and the good sense of our people are worthy of the

[1] The Army of the Potomac, under McClellan, after the disastrous Seven Days' Battles.

highest admiration. I wish you could see and feel, as we do, this truly magnificent display of national character and feeling. You would be proud with us, of it all. Do not believe what you see in the "Times," or in other papers, of discord or of want of heart, or failure of resolution at the North. We mean to save the Union and to establish the Government of the United States over the whole country;—we mean to do this for the sake of Liberty and of civilization, and in doing it the slavery of the black race in America will come to an end.

I am sorry for, but not surprised at, the general misconception abroad of our position, our purposes, and our principles. We do enough foolish and wrong things, and we say enough, to lead astray any one who cannot see through the outside to the deeper truths below, and who has not sympathy with our institutions and our better hopes and intentions. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, 23 September, 1862.[1]

MY DEAREST GEORGE: — God be praised! I can hardly see to write, — for when I think of this great act of Freedom, and all it implies, my heart and my eyes overflow with the deepest, most serious gladness.

I rejoice with you. Let us rejoice together, and with all the lovers of liberty, and with all the enslaved and oppressed everywhere.

I think to-day that this world is glorified by the

[1] The day after Lincoln read the Emancipation Proclamation to his Cabinet.

spirit of Christ. How beautiful it is to be able to read the sacred words under this new light.

"He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

The war is paid for.

Dearest George, I was very glad to see that your brother was safe, and to hear of his gallantry in the late actions.[1]

Love and congratulations from us all to all of you.

Ever yours

C. E. N.

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, 30 September, 1862.

Your note was most welcome. It was delightful to exchange congratulations on the Declaration, not of Independence, but of Liberty. The 22d September will be one of our memorable days forever. As you say nothing could be better than the answer made by the New York Convention to the Proclamation. Wadsworth's speech was excellent; it had the true tone, and was not only earnest but effective. The field is well laid out, — and there can be no doubt as to who will win.

Now when does your Congressional Nominating Convention meet? And what are your prospects? I

[1] At Antietam, where Lieutenant J. B. Curtis's regiment was cut to pieces and driven back, he seized the colours, and shouted, "I go back no further! What is left of the Fourth Rhode Island, form here!" For the rest of the day he fought as a private in an adjoining command. See Cary's *Curtis*, p. 161 *n*.

will "stump" for you, or write for you, or do anything to promote your success which you want done. It will be service for the nation, not for you.[1]

I did not thank you in my last note for the delightful notice of Clough and his poems in the last Harper. It said everything I could have wished, and will give real pleasure, I am sure, to Mrs. Clough, to whom I have sent it. There has been no notice so appreciative, so tender or so just. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, 12 November, 1862.

. . . Were it not for one or two *ifs*, I should feel much better about the state of affairs than I have for some time. The worst of the *ifs* is the one concerning Lincoln. I am very much afraid that a domestic cat will not answer when one wants a Bengal tiger. It is encouraging that Congress meets so soon again; the President will be helped by it.

Another *if* must go before Burnside's name. He may be able to command one hundred thousand men in the field, but is he? He, like our other generals, is on trial. How we shall rejoice if he succeeds.

You are certainly right in your view of the elections. The Administration will not be hurt by the reaction if the war goes on prosperously. If we have a vigorous, brilliant and really successful winter campaign there will be not much opposition left next spring; but if otherwise — if we have successes that lead to nothing, and victories that are next door to defeats, if the in-

[1] Curtis did not receive the nomination.

fluence of Washington air follows and paralyzes our armies, then I think it will be hard times for us and all honest republicans, who hope for the country and believe in its institutions and its people. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, 30 January, 1863.

One busy day has succeeded another since you were here till I am at last reduced to a condition in which I am fit for no work, and so set about writing a note and sending my love to you.

The Hero of one hundred ungained Victories, — the conqueror in his own bulletins, is at present in Boston, and but a few people remain calm. Some are excited with enthusiastic admiration of their own imagination of McClellan; some busy with wire-pulling; some active to prevent others, "without distinction" of party, gaining any advantage out of relations with the disgraced Captain and candidate for the next Presidency; and some very much disquieted by all this folly. So you see those who keep quiet and innocent minds are in a despicable minority. . . .

We are making arrangements here to secure the circulation of good telling articles from foreign and our own newspapers, to influence and direct public opinion. We propose to secure from one hundred thousand to five hundred thousand readers for two articles per week, and perhaps more. I shall be the "editor," so to say, with John Forbes and Sam Ward[1] as advisers. Please bear this in mind and *send to me, marked, arti-*

[1] Samuel G. Ward, later an active correspondent of Norton's.

cles which you think should be thus circulated. I shall have frequent occasion to borrow from "Harper," — or rather from you in "Harper." . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, 1 February, 1863.

Here is our prospectus. If at any time you want to secure a still wider circulation for any one of your articles than their appearance in "Harper" affords, please send me from one hundred to five hundred slips, which can be cheaply enough struck off if done before the form for the paper is broken up.

McClellan is still here, and has been causing people to break the Sabbath to-day. Agassiz is a devoted admirer of his, and said yesterday that "he was a great but not a towering man." Dr. Holmes studying him physiologically talks of "broad base of brain," "threshing floor of ideas," no invention or original force of intellect, but compact, strong, executive nature, "with a neck such as not one man in ten thousand possesses," "muscular as a prize-fighter," etc., etc. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, 26 February, 1863.

. . . It was pleasant to hear from you of your visit to Philadelphia, and to hear from John,[1] on the same day, his glowing account of it. What a loyal place Philadelphia has become! We should be as loyal here if we

[1] Their common friend, John W. Field of Philadelphia, with whom Norton had travelled in Sicily.

had a few more out-and-out secessionists. Our Union Club — we have dropped the offensive word "League" — promises well: two hundred members already, and Mr. Everett and his followers pledged to principles which suit you and me. We are proposing to take the Abbott Lawrence house on Park Street, and to be strong by position as well as by numbers. But nothing will do for the country, — neither Clubs nor pamphlets nor lectures, nor Conscription Bills (three cheers for the despotism necessary to secure freedom), nor Banking Bills, nor Tom Thumb, nor Institutes, — nothing will do us much good but victories. If we take Charleston and Vicksburg we conquer and trample out the Copperheads, — but if not?

I confess to the most longing hope, the most anxious desire to know of our success. I try to be ready for news of failure, indeed I shall be ready for such news if it comes, and we must all only draw a few quick breaths and form a sterner resolve, and fight a harder fight.

Where is the best statement, in a clear and quiet way, of the political necessity of the preservation of the Union, its vital necessity to our national existence? Seward has done harm by keeping up the notion of the old Union, — but who has seen clearest the nature of the new Union for which we are fighting? . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, 9 March, 1863.

. . . The Democrats seem to me to have come to a consciousness of their danger. They are now setting

themselves right and securing power in the future. If we can fairly kill slavery during the next two years, make it really and truly powerless as a political institution, then I have no objection to the Democrats coming back to their old and familiar places of power. The Republican party has not proved itself able in administration; it is better on the whole for the progress of the country and for the improvement of public opinion that the party founded on the essential principles of right and justice should be in the opposition. Moreover there are questions to be settled after the war is over which can be better settled by the unprincipled party in power, than by one bound by its timidities, and unaccustomed to impose restraints. We shall probably require some "conservatism" at the close of the war, and the Democratic party in power is likely to be conservative in some matters on which the Republicans would be weak and divided. I do not think that there is much chance of the formation of a real Union party. The Democrats will keep their organization, will exclude their too open peace members, and will reject all union with the honest men of our side. The odium of the war, of taxes, of disregard of personal liberty, of a violated constitution will be thrown on the Republicans, or the Unionists if that be their name, and the glory of securing victory and peace, and of reëstablishing the Union, will be claimed by the Democrats. With which I shall not grumble. The Millennium is not at hand, but there *is* a good time coming, — and the country, with a thousand evils remaining, will be the better for the war, and Democrats

like you and me may rejoice at the triumph of popular government and the essential soundness of the people.

Is this inveterate optimism? Are we at the beginning, on the contrary, of the epoch of the Lower Republic? . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, 3 September, 1863.

It is pleasant to think of you as so near us. It would be much pleasanter to have you with us, — especially this morning, that we might congratulate each other on the extraordinary excellence of the President's letter.[1] He rises with each new effort, and his letters are successive victories. Indeed the series of his letters since and including the one to the Albany Committee are, as he says to General Grant of Vicksburg, "of almost inestimable value to the country,"— for they are of the rarest class of political documents, arguments seriously addressed by one in power to the conscience and reason of the citizens of the commonwealth. They are of the more value to us as permanent precedents — examples of the possibility of the coexistence of a strong government with entire and immediate dependence upon and direct appeal to the people. There is in them the clearest tone of uprightness of character, purity of intention, and goodness of heart. . . .

[1] Presumably Lincoln's letter of August 26, 1863, to J. C. Conkling, in answer to an invitation to attend a mass-meeting of unconditional Union men at Springfield, Illinois, on September 3.

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL
Monday evening, 21 September, 1863.

... I was glad to see Olmsted,[1] but I wish I had known him before he was just going to leave this quarter of the world. It is hard that he should have to give up the civilization that he likes for the barbarism that he does not like. All the lines of his face imply refinement and sensibility to such a degree that it is not till one has looked through them to what is underneath, that the force of his will and the reserved power of his character become evident. It is a pity that we cannot keep him here. Our society needs organizers almost as much as the Mariposa settlers, miners and squatters need one. However, thanks to the war, the Atlantic and the Pacific States have been bound far closer together than of old, and are every day drawn nearer and nearer. — A ring at the door bell is the occasion of that [ink spot], — and I hear William James's pleasant and manly voice in the other room from which the sound of my Mother's voice has been coming to me as she read aloud the Consular Experiences of the most original of consuls. To-night I am half annoyed, half amused at Hawthorne. He is nearly as bad as Carlyle. His dedication to F. Pierce, — the correspondent of Jefferson Davis, the flatterer of traitors, and the emissary of treason, — reads like the bitterest of satires; and in that I have my satisfaction.

[1] Frederick Law Olmsted, whose books on the South had already interested Norton deeply. Their immediate sympathy led to enduring bonds of friendship and coöperation in work for public good.

The public will laugh. "Praise undeserved" (say the copybooks) "is satire in disguise," — and what a blow his friend has dealt to the weakest of ex-Presidents. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, 27 September, 1863.

. . . Charles Eliot is going abroad with his wife and children, and proposes to spend the next six or eight months in Paris. He means to study Chemistry, and is also desirous to become thoroughly acquainted with the system and management and organization of some of the public institutions of France. He has a genius for such matters, and is well fitted by his training here to discover in the foreign institutions the points of most practical importance as capable of adaptation to our needs.[1]

He wants a letter to John Bigelow, and I have promised to get it for him. Will you write one or ask Godwin for one? And will you let me have it in the course of the week? . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, 16 October, 1863.

I heartily and with all my heart rejoice with you in the result of Tuesday's elections. All our confidence in the intelligence and patriotism of our people is justified. The victory is the moral Waterloo of the rebellion. The end is in view, — with Union and freedom and peace. . . .

I have just undertaken, in company with Lowell,

[1] Six years later Mr. Eliot became President of Harvard.

the editorship of the "North American Review." The arrangement with the publishers is a tolerably liberal one, and I think we can put some life into the old dry bones of the Quarterly. Will you sometimes write an article? Will you in the course of the next six weeks write one, — on any national question you choose, or on any other subject if you are tired of politics, — letting us have it for the January number? Do if you can do it. We can pay you two dollars and fifty cents a page. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, Thursday, 10 December, 1863.

. . . Last night we went to hear Beecher. He spoke admirably, and it was a great pleasure to hear him. It was not great oratory, but it was a fine, large, broad, sensible, human, sympathetic performance. To-morrow we have a dinner of our Dozen Club for him.

Once more we may rejoice that Abraham Lincoln is President. How wise and how admirably timed is his Proclamation.[1] As a state paper its naïveté is wonderful. Lincoln will introduce a new style into state papers; he will make them sincere, and his honesty will compel even politicians to like virtue. I conceive his character to be on the whole the great net gain from the war. . . .

In the summer of this year (1863) Leslie Stephen, a warm advocate of the Northern cause, had come to

[1] This proclamation, transmitted to Congress with Lincoln's Third Annual Message, Dec. 8, 1863, provided both for the renewal of allegiance by persons in rebellion and the restoration of state governments under the Union.

America, "to see for himself," as Maitland says in his "Life of Stephen," "how matters stood and to collect powder and shot for use in England." In October at Lowell's house Norton and Stephen met. In his diary on October 6, Stephen wrote: "Norton a very pleasant man. . . . N. discussed certain points of religion with me." What Stephen and Norton were to become to each other has already been made clear to readers of Maitland's delightful life of his friend; — and if further record be needed Norton's letters will show what warm affection and close intellectual sympathy he felt for Stephen.

In 1874, writing to Ruskin, Norton says: — "I wish you knew my friend Leslie Stephen, — one of the most affectionate and most honest-minded and modest of men; not to be knocked by any blow from his equipoise of sense and imaginative sympathy; a sceptic without bitterness, a thinker without pretention; muscular physically and mentally without brutality; shy, sensitive, tender, manly, looking out very straight on the world, and neither hoping, caring, nor fearing much in life. I wish chance could bring you together."

Norton's earliest letters to Stephen are lost, but the course of his days and interests runs on in the correspondence with other friends.

To F. L. Olmsted

CAMBRIDGE, MASS., 24 January, 1864.

MY DEAR OLMSTED, — . . . Mr. Lincoln continues to gain the confidence of the people, and it looks now as if there would be little opposition to his reëlection.

You will find an able article by Lowell on the President's Policy in the "North American" for January, a copy of which I have sent to you. Lowell and I have undertaken the editing of this old Review. . . . I trust that you will help us by writing for us, — and in asking you to do so I do not feel that I am asking as for a contribution for the amusement of the readers of a magazine, — but rather for a patriotic work. We must use the advantages which the times give us. There is an opportunity now to make the "North American" one of the means of developing the nation, of stimulating its better sense, of setting before it and holding up to it its own ideal, — at least of securing expression for its clearest thought and most accurate scholarship. I hope you will feel that it is an opportunity not to be thrown away. Whatever you may like to write we shall be glad to print. If you have anything to tell or say concerning life in California or the relations of the Pacific to the Atlantic States, or of the state of society in Bear Valley, or of the habits and characters of the miners, — pray put it into the form of an article, and send it to me. I wish you would send something of this kind to me before the summer. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, Class Day, 24 June, 1864.

. . . The Baltimore Convention [1] did its duty well, and the air has cleared a good deal since it was held. I should have been glad if a more solid democratic plank

[1] The National Union Convention, held early in June at Baltimore, had renominated Lincoln for the Presidency.

had been inserted in the platform, — but our politicians do not yet begin to understand the distinctive, essential feature of our institutions, and have only a distant, theoretic comprehension of the meaning and worth of truly democratic ideas. This war is a struggle of the anti-democrats with the democrats; of the maintenance of the privilege of a class with the maintainers of the common rights of man. This view includes all the aspects of the war, and it is the ground upon which the people can be most readily brought to the sacrifices still required, and to the patient bearing of the long and heavy burdens it imposes upon them.

I have great confidence that the summer's campaign will end well for us. If we have, as we may have (though I shall not be disappointed if we do not have it), a great victory, then the rebellion as a military power will be nearly at an end. But if we merely take Richmond, one more serious campaign at least will be before us, and the country will feel the weight of the war more than ever before. . . .

The summer of 1864 was the first that Norton and his family spent in Ashfield, a village lying above the Deerfield Valley among the hills of northwestern Massachusetts, which from this time forth was his second home. The house in which he established himself — remodelling it to the needs of his household — had no background of family associations like those of Shady Hill, but the town and Norton's pleasant acres on the edge of it possessed the New England quality that lends itself — with all its spare grace — to the growth

of local affection. As at Shady Hill friends came and went. Curtis, whose first introduction to the village was as a guest of the Nortons, and, afterwards, John W. Field, of Philadelphia, in due course became Ashfield neighbours. The interests of the community became their interests — to a degree which led in later days to the well-remembered Ashfield Academy Dinners, and to many acts of service for the town, among these the founding of a library. From the first, Norton's letters written at Ashfield reveal a peculiar satisfaction in the life the place afforded: there three consecutive summers were passed, and there between 1864 and 1867 two of his children were born. When in 1868 Norton and his family left home — to be gone five years — his house in Ashfield was occupied by Curtis.

To J. R. Lowell

ASHFIELD, July 7, 1864.

MY DEAREST JAMES, — We are having such a pleasant quiet time that I wish you were with us. The house we are in is a good old-fashioned farmhouse, with a stretch of outhouses and barns such as one likes to see. There are no modern conveniences, — unless a bell for the front door be considered so, — and we fall inevitably into primitive ways of life. . . .

The little village itself where we are has an air of rural comfort and pleasantness that is really delightful. It is embosomed in the hills, not crowded upon by them, but seeming to have a sweet natural sufficient shelter from them. We are within a stone's throw of the tavern, of the meeting houses, the three shops, and

the post-office, — and on the other side we are as near two hills between which the road runs, and from either of which there is a wide and beautiful view. . . . Yesterday we took a drive over hills, through hemlock and beech woods, over an upland moor, through Bear Swamp, and "Little Switzerland," that we all agreed we must take again when you are with us. I am sure this country will delight you. To my taste it is far more attractive, and more beautiful, than the scenery in the parts of the Berkshires that I know. Many of the views remind me of scenes among the English lakes, on a smaller scale. Joined with the picturesqueness of nature, there is a charm from the evident comfort of the people. Wherever you see a habitation you see what looks like a good home. There are but three town poor, and they are very old. There is but one Irish family, they say, in the township. The little village of Tin Pot, two miles away, does, however, look as if its name were characteristic. There is a good deal of loafing and drinking there, but the loafers and drunkards are not permitted by public opinion to come up here. The line is one of positive separation between the two villages.

The air has a fine bracing quality, — 1300 feet above the sea. To-day we have a little rain. I lounge and invite my soul. The newspapers come regularly but late. We seem out of the world. Still we were glad last night at the news of the destruction of the Alabama, and not sorry for the mode of Semmes's escape. He would have been an unpleasant prisoner on our hands. We could not properly have hung him as a pirate, and to leave

him unhung would not have suited our vindictive commercial classes.

I find it hard to be patient in these days, — it would be much easier were you here, but now I have no one to talk over affairs with.

I wish Mr. Quincy[1] could have lived happily a year or two longer to carry the news of the suppression of the rebellion and the extinction of slavery to the other world, so as to be able to remind Hamilton of their conversation the year before his death and convert him to trust in the people, and to confidence in the permanence of the Constitution. But now that public honours will be paid to the memory of Mr. Quincy, cannot we get the sum raised for the Statue? About $4000 is needed. $5000 would be better to cover expenses.

What a kind old man he was! . . . A judicious person might make a brief memoir of him that should be full of interest, — but save us from these big Parker 8vos, these elegant Prescott 4tos.[2]

The July "North American" seems to me good but too heavy. How can we make it lighter? People will write on the heavy subjects; and all our authors are destitute of humour. Nobody but you knows how to say weighty things lightly; nobody but you has the art of light writing. And have you written to Motley? If not *please do so* before replying to this note. We really need to get him on to our staff of contributors. . . .

[1] Josiah Quincy, president of Harvard when Norton was in college, died July 1, 1864, in his ninety-third year.

[2] Weiss's *Theodore Parker* and Ticknor's *Prescott* each appeared in 1864.

To G. W. Curtis

ASHFIELD, 14 July, 1864.

Your notes are so pleasant and add to the worth of our evening mail so much that I wish you would write to me every day. Last night, just at sunset, when Jane and Dora [1] and I came back from renewing our youth in gathering the wild raspberries on a beautiful hillside half a mile away, Susan met us just as we came in sight of home, with your note and the other letters and papers which the coach from Deerfield had just brought in. I looked first to see what had become of the world during the day before, to find out whether the raiders had yet reached their fate after scaring Pennsylvania out of its senses and trampling "My Maryland" in the dust, — and finding that we were still cut off from Washington and still the victims of rumors, — I opened your note and was contented.

Ashfield has neither telegraph nor railroad, and but one mail a day, — and it is a good, patriotic, happy little village, that does not believe in being excited, but holds firm to its faith in the country and is quiet in the assurance that the rebels are soon to be on their knees. It is so pleasant a place that I hope you will come up to see it and us while we are here. The scenery all around us is delightful, with the mingled charms of fresh wild nature and the cultivation of cheerful farms. It is prettier than any other scenery I know in Massachusetts, — and is like the tamer parts of the English lake country. The village is as quiet as if every day were

[1] Mrs. Norton's youngest sister, Miss Theodora Sedgwick.

Sunday. The people are all well off. There are no poor in the town. The air is cool and fresh, the hills have a fine wind blowing across their tops, the little brooks run singing and leaping down their sides, the fields are gardens of wild fruit, the woods are thick and dark and beautiful as the forest of Broceliande, the glades look like the openings in a park, — one could write Massachusetts idylls or a New England "Arcadia" in this happy, tranquil region of the world. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

ASHFIELD, MASS., 24 July, 1864.

. . . This week, let us hope, we shall hear that Sherman is in Atlanta, and that he is breaking up the army opposed to him. His work is not better done than Grant will do his. But I do not want peace till there is certainty of our carrying the Amendment to the Constitution. We must have that to make peace sure.

The Rebel self-appointed peacemakers took nothing by their move, and Lincoln showed as usual his straightforward good sense. What a contrast between him and the politicians who fancy themselves his superiors in insight and shrewdness! What does Raymond [1] mean by his Saturday's article on Lincoln's statement of terms? Is he hedging for a reconstruction with slavery? If so, he is more shortsighted and more unprincipled than I believed. I never fancied, indeed, that he had principles, and I thought he had learned enough not to confess such bad ones. . . .

[1] Henry J. Raymond, editor of the New York *Times*.

To J. R. Lowell

ASHFIELD, 10 August, 1864.

. . . George Curtis spent last Sunday with us, and desired me not to forget to send you his love. He was very pleasant and gave us very animated and interesting accounts of the Baltimore Convention, and of the visit of the Committee of the Convention to the President. He is firm in his confidence in the excellence of Mr. Lincoln's judgment, and in his strong common sense. He agreed with me in thinking that Woodman's [1] stories of his interference with military affairs might have such foundation that they could not be called false, but that they would bear a very different aspect did we know the whole concerning them. Mr. Lincoln is obliged to carry on this war as a civil as well as a military leader, and civil considerations may often compel him to act in a manner which would be very unwise were he guided by purely military conditions.

I dare say you have heard that Arthur Sedgwick [2] has been taken prisoner. We have heard nothing directly from him. . . . This is a pretty severe experience for him, — and for his sisters, especially for Sara, but she bears it with great strength and cheerfulness.

Curtis has promised me an article on Hawthorne, and we must squeeze some dull article out of the next number to get it in. I like Howells' paper on Modern

[1] Probably Governor Andrew's intimate friend, Cyrus Woodman.

[2] Mrs. Norton's brother was a first Lieutenant in the Twentieth Massachusetts Volunteers.

Italian Dramatists. It is pleasantly written and full of agreeable information. I hope you have asked him to write again. I have been writing a short article on Goldwin Smith. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

ASHFIELD, August 25, 1864.

If your life has been as quiet as ours since you left us I do not wonder that you have not written. The days have gone very pleasantly, but too fast, and now we are in our last week of stay here. Such peaceful little episodes cannot last long. But we are hoping now to come back here next year. I have almost concluded the purchase of this little place, — as I told you I was thinking of doing. And now cannot some arrangement be made by which Anna and the children and you shall be here next summer too? I cannot think of anything pleasanter than this would be if we were all well. . . . We should have such a good time.

Lowell has been spending three or four days with us, and has been delighted with the climate, the scenery, and the quiet. He seemed better than for a long time, and he, too, wants to come here next year. Last Tuesday Jane and Grace and he drove over to see the Hoosac Tunnel. They found the Tunnel no better than any other great big deep, damp hole, — but they found the scenery on the way so pretty, so various, and in parts so wild and grand that they came home enthusiastic and hungry. We will drive over there next summer.

Pray send me the Hawthorne article as soon as you

can, for the October number of the Review is printing fast, — and I must know what is to go in, and how much room it will take. Lowell is thinking of writing on Peace, but if you have already written or are writing it for us, he will gladly take up some other topic. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

HOME, 6 September, 1864.

I have just read your paper on Hawthorne, and am greatly pleased with it. Your analysis of his mental and moral character, and of its intellectual results, seems to me eminently subtile, delicate, and tender. I regret only that it is so short, — for there is much suggested in what you have written that might well be developed, and there are some traits of Hawthorne's genius which scarcely have justice done them in the brevity of your essay. The one point which I should like to have had more fully brought out is the opposition that existed between his heart and his intellect. His genius continually, as it seems to me, overmastered himself, and the depth and fulness of his feelings were forced into channels of expression in which they were confined and against which they struggled in vain. He was always hurting himself, till he became a strange compound of callousness and sensitiveness. But I do not mean to analyze. Your paper is a delightful one and I am very glad to have it.

And now let us rejoice together over the great good news. It lifts the cloud, and the prospect clears. We really see now the beginning of the end. The party

that went for peace at Chicago[1] has gone to pieces at Atlanta. The want of practical good sense in our own ranks pains me. The real question at issue is so simple, and the importance of solving it correctly so immense, that I am surprised alike at the confusion of mind and the failure of appreciation of the stake among those who are most deeply interested in the result. Even if Mr. Lincoln were not, as you and I believe, the best candidate, he is now the only possible one for the Union party, and surely, such being the case, personal preferences should be sunk in consideration of the unspeakable evil to which their indulgence may lead. I have little patience with Wade, and Sumner, and Chase, letting their silly vexation at not having a chance for the Presidency thus cloud their patriotism and weaken the strength of the party. . . .

I am glad you were to meet Goldwin Smith at dinner.[2] He spent his first day on shore with us, — and we had much interesting talk. He is as good at least as his books. I gave him a note to you, and begged him to send it to you in advance of his going to New York that you might meet him there on his arrival, and secure him the right entrance to the big city.

[1] The Democratic National Convention, which nominated McClellan for the Presidency. It met at Chicago, August 29.

[2] Goldwin Smith in his *Reminiscences* writes of his first visit to America: "In 1864, when the war was drawing to a close, I paid a visit to the United States charged with the sympathy of Bright, Cobden, and other British friends of the North as a little antidote to the venom of the too powerful *Times*. . . . My friendships are, saving my marriage, the great events of my life; and of my friendships none is more dear than that with Charles Eliot Norton, who was my host, more than hospitable, in Cambridge. He combined the highest European culture with the most fervent love of his own country."

Will you give him a note to Seward and to Mr. Lincoln? He does not wish to go to Washington without formal introductions, — and he has now only a letter from Colonel Lawrence (T. Bigelow) which is not the right one for him to carry. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

Sunday evening, 25 September, 1864.

. . . We had a pleasant Club dinner yesterday. . . . Sumner has toned down greatly since it seems certain that Lincoln is to be reëlected. His opinion of Lincoln "is at least not higher than it was three years ago." An officer, just from Atlanta, came in and told us some good stories of Sherman, — and of the transportation department of the army. There has been a corps of six thousand men detailed to keep the Rail Road from Nashville to Atlanta in order. The bridge across the Chattahoochie, — a railroad bridge seven hundred and eight feet long, and ninety-three feet high, was built in four days. The army has been well supplied, in great measure with canned food; — "Yes," said Sherman, "I am perfectly satisfied with the transportation service, — it has given us abundance of *desecrated* vegetables and *consecrated* milk."

This as a pendant to his recent letters. What a week this last has been for good letters! Two from Lincoln, that are worthy of the best letter-writer of the time, — so simple, manly, and direct; one from Grant, not less simple and straightforward, clearing the air with its plain frankness from rumours and innuendoes, and affording a most striking contrast to the letters

which Mr. Lincoln was in the habit of receiving from a former Commander-in-Chief; and two from Sherman, masterpieces of strong sense in strong words. How his wrath swells and grows till it bursts in "Tell that to the Marines," and with what indignant common-sense does he reject the canting appeal to God and humanity of the Southern slave-drivers. He writes as well as he fights. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

SHADY HILL, October 18, 1864.

. . . When I got home last Wednesday night I found a telegram from Goldwin Smith to say that he had been detained by a calm, and would be with us the next day, — but it was not till Friday that he reached us, — and here he is still with us — at this instant writing at the table in the Library while I am in the little study. He is a most pleasant inmate, — and his appreciation of America and of our cause is so just, so clear, and so complete, that there are few Americans who at a time like this would be more sympathetic, or more truly genial.

He suffers in domestic life from an English education, which has enforced reserve and want of quick reciprocation of expression on a character naturally open and sensitively sympathetic. He has had no home life to bring out and develope the power of quick responsiveness. At six years old he was sent to school, and he has never lived at home since. But it would be doing him great injustice were I to imply that there is any marked defect in his manner as a mere manner of

society, — it is only as an intimate domestic manner that it sometimes fails, and then, (as I have said,) rather from want of practice in the expression of feeling than from absence of the feeling itself.

We are doing a good deal during his visit, and talking as men talk when they really have something to say and something to learn from each other. He will be with us till the end of next week.

The "Review" has just passed into the hands of Ticknor & Fields. This is still a secret. I am glad of it, for I retain as absolute control as ever, and T. & F. are much better able to give the "Review" a wide circulation than Crosby was. . . .

To Aubrey de Vere

CAMBRIDGE, MASS., December 27, 1864.

. . . Your last letter was very welcome, and should have been sooner answered had not I been too busy for letter-writing during the last month or two. A little more than a year ago Lowell and I assumed editorial charge of the "North American Review," our oldest and most important quarterly. The weight of editing falls upon me, and at times I am fully occupied by it. I should not have undertaken it had I not believed that the "Review" might be made a powerful instrument for affecting public opinion on the great questions now at issue here, and had I not known that something might be done by its means to raise the standards of criticism and scholarship among us. I have not been wholly disappointed. We have succeeded in giving new influence to the "Review,"

and have good reason for hoping to gain still more for it.

But this, with other work, keeps me very busy. A stronger man than I might do much more, but I can, in any given time, effect but so much. . . .

The last three months have done more for us than any others since the war began. The reëlection of Mr. Lincoln was a greater triumph than any military victory could be over the principles of the rebellion. The eighth of November, 1864, — the election day, will stand always as one of the most memorable days in our history. . . .

Mr. Lincoln is constantly gaining in popular respect and confidence. He is not a man whose qualities are fitted to excite a personal enthusiasm, but they are of a kind to inspire trust. He is an admirable ruler for our democratic republic. He has shown many of the highest qualities of statesmanship, and I have little doubt that his course and his character will both be estimated more highly in history than they are, in the main, by his contemporaries. . . .

The letters to Curtis through the final months of the war have not been preserved, and Lowell and Norton at this time were together in Cambridge, so that the occasions for writing were few and unimportant. On one of them Norton wrote to Lowell, April 10, 1865, the day after Lee's surrender: "My heart is as full as it can be. I did not know till it was lifted this morning how heavy a load we had been bearing. I think of all those who have suffered that we might rejoice. The

dawn of our new day is bright." But of the sharp emotions that came five days later when Lincoln died, and of the clouds that darkened the sky of the new day, there is no adequate record in existing letters.

That Norton's patriotic service did not end with the war, there are ample evidences. His work for the "North American Review" went on, and in the spring of 1865 he was in active coöperation with those who were planning to publish a new weekly, "The Nation." Olmsted[1] had introduced Godkin to Norton, and the two men found at once that they had so much in common that not only coöperation, but a warm friendship was inevitable. A fund of $100,000 was required for the successful launching of the journal, and through John Murray Forbes and others Norton was instrumental in collecting the contribution of Boston and its vicinity to the new enterprise. Quite apart from this tangible aid and other help in practical details, he brought to the undertaking something which Godkin himself recognized as unique. In the first month of "The Nation's" existence, Godkin wrote to Norton: "You are the only man in the whole body of projectors with whom I know I am in thorough sympathy." After the journal had been published for a year, he wrote again: "If the paper succeeds, I shall always

[1] As early as September, 1863, Olmsted had written to Norton: "Godkin has consented to go to Boston to confer with you about the proposed weekly paper. . . . I have known him under a great variety of circumstances, and his general keen good sense and unconscious, natural, healthy energy of manly sentiment — so unconscious and healthy and matter-of-course-like in its expression as to be not readily recognized — is very charming to me. I love him and lean upon him strongly. He takes up this matter now because I request it and press it upon him as a public duty."

ascribe it to you, as without your support and encouragement I do not think I should have been able to endure to the end."[1] This genuine service to the cause of American civilization takes its place in the natural sequence of interests through which Norton most closely translated his aims into deeds. When only two numbers of the "Nation" had appeared, his inspiriting enthusiasm for it found its way into a letter to Lowell (July 16, 1865): "How good the 'Nation' is! I think it promises better by far than anything of the sort we have had. Godkin writes to me that No. 3 will be better still,—that it is hard to get anything to work well at first. He will have hard work to educate his writers. They have not got the art of weekly journalizing yet."

To Miss Gaskell

ASHFIELD, October 2, 1865.

MY DEAR META,—. . . After a long silence occasioned by the war I have lately had one or two notes from Ruskin,—the last came in the same mail with your letter, and was in very striking contrast to it. He writes very sadly, and his letters bring sadness to me especially as indications of his failure to understand and sympathize with the ideal side of America. "The war," he says, "has put a gulph between all Americans and me so that I do not care

[1] See Ogden's *Life and Letters of Edwin Lawrence Godkin*, vol. i, 245, 250. Norton's letters to Godkin are full of words of encouragement. On May 13, 1866, he wrote: "I am sorry the laugh was taken out of you yesterday. . . . My dear fellow, I shall wish the *Nation* had never been born if it is going to take the laugh out of you. If you can't laugh on the day the last number is issued (if that day shall ever come) *pereat Natio*."

to hear what they think or tell them what I think on any matter." It is in vain to try to bring him to comprehend that in spite of all that is wrong and base in our present conditions, in spite of all the evil passions which war has worked, in spite of all the selfishness and conceited over-confidence generated by our marvellous material prosperity, — there is in our national life a counterbalance of devotion to principle, of readiness to sacrifice whatever is required for the maintenance of liberty and human rights, and a real advance toward the fulfilment of the best hopes of man for men. He fancies that our happiness is a delusion, our efforts vanity, and our confidence folly. I believe that we have really made an advance in civilization, that the principles on which our political and social order rest are in harmony with the moral laws of the universe, that we have set up an ideal which may never be perfectly attained, but which is of such a nature that the mere effort to attain it makes progress in virtue and in genuine happiness certain. The character and principles of Mr. Lincoln were essentially typical of the character and principles of the people. The proposition that *all* men are created equal, — equal that is in certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, — equal as moral and responsible beings, — has sunk deep into the very hearts of this people, and is moulding them in accordance with the conclusions that proceed from it. It is the inspiration and the explanation of our progress and our content. To embody it continually more and more completely in our institu-

tions of government and of society is the conscious or unconscious desire and effort of all good men among us. It is as Mr. Lincoln admirably said, — "A standard maxim for free society, which should be familiar to all and revered by all; constantly looked to, constantly laboured for, and even though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated, and thereby constantly spreading and deepening its influence, and augmenting the happiness and value of life to all people of all colours everywhere." The war has given us a right, such as we had not before, to trust in the fidelity of the people to the principles of justice, liberty and fair play. And it is because of this just confidence that one need not be disheartened when, as now, there are signs of moral slackness and decline. After the exertions and excitements of the last four years one need not be surprised at a reaction of feeling; and if the high standard of effort is somewhat lowered. The millennium will not come in our time; and peace will not bring rest to those who fight for "the cause" and not for victory.

It seems probable from Mr. Johnson's course that we shall lose some of the best results which might have sprung from the war. Under his scheme of reorganization of the Union it now looks as if the Southern States would come back into the Union with no provision for the securing of any political rights or privileges to the Negro, and no provision for his good-treatment by the former slave-holding and slave-despising class. I fear lest the very freedom which the freedmen have gained, be so limited by state laws and local enact-

ments, that they may be kept in a condition very little superior to slavery. It would take too long to explain and set forth all the grounds for this fear. But on the other hand I have hope that the great social and moral changes that have taken place in the Southern States, the establishment of free speech and a free press in them, the extraordinary demand for labour, the education which the blacks have received in the army and in schools, and above all the future action of political parties in the Northern States, — may all tend gradually but irresistibly to gain for the Negro the full rights of independent and equal citizenship. The discussions and the actions of the few next years on this subject will be of the highest interest and importance.

For the past three or four months the point which has been most discussed in connection with "reconstruction" is that of suffrage for the Negro. The reasons for giving the right of suffrage to the freedmen are as strong as they are numerous, are reasons based upon policy as well as upon principle. I think Negro suffrage could have been easily secured at the end of the war by wise and foreseeing statesmanship. I think it would have been secured had Mr. Lincoln lived; and that it would have been found the most powerful instrument for elevating and educating the blacks, for making them helpful and advancing citizens of the republic, and for introducing a better civilization, and a truer social order than has hitherto existed at the South. But the hour favourable for this has passed, and Negro suffrage will have to be won by a long and hard struggle.

President Johnson has been a slave-holder; he is a theoretical democrat so far as white men are concerned, but his democracy does not extend to the black. He hates, or perhaps I should say hated, slavery because it developed an aristocratic class, not because it was intrinsically wrong. I doubt if he has any strong moral aversion to it, — but he has an immoral distrust of (I will not call it aversion to) the Negro. He holds that he is inferior to the white man, that the white man is to govern, the black to be governed. His influence, is at present, practically thrown against Negro suffrage. . . . I must bring my political letter to a close before the subject is half exhausted. I will send you the "Nation," a weekly paper in the establishment of which I have been greatly interested and which will keep you informed of our affairs. You may, I think, rely on the fairness of its statements and the soundness of its opinions. . . .

To John Ruskin

CAMBRIDGE, December 28, 1865.

MY DEAR RUSKIN, — . . . Your last note gave me great pleasure, — and so have your lectures done. And yet what you write never seems to me to do full justice to yourself. I am ready sometimes to quarrel with it on that account. You are in truth so different from the image which men form of you from your books that I wish always that your writings were completer mirrors of yourself. When you become an historic character you may perhaps be better understood; but for the time being you have no right to

expect better treatment than that which commonly awaits the prophets; — not exactly, perhaps, material stones and actual rotten eggs, but other things, symbolic, as bad if not worse. You are, there can be no doubt, terribly provoking, so absolute, and so aggravatingly right, and at the same time so wrong-headed. You hit even your friends such blows! . . .

I am pretty well, — busy as usual with every day work, — with my two little children, — with writing more or less, mainly on political affairs, — with reading just now Grote's Plato, and Munro's Lucretius. . . .

Ever affectionately Yours,

CHARLES ELIOT NORTON.

Please give my best respects to your Mother, if she care to have them.

To J. R. Lowell

ASHFIELD, May 26, 1866.

MY DEAREST JAMES, — . . . Till to-day the weather has been cold, but to-day we have a warm sunshine with a delightful air, and a soft haze in which, under the flitting cloud shadows, the hills lie as blue as any that Titian ever painted. The meadows are full of the songs of the bob-o-links, while the "golden robins" are singing and whistling in the maples around the house. The little village is very quiet, and peaceful and pretty, and everything is pleasant and happy.

The pink azaleas and the laurels are in bud, and one or two warm days would make the woods beautiful with a profusion of bloom. I wish you could be here to enjoy it with us. I propose that when you retire from

Cambridge you should come up here to live. We will buy together five or six hundred acres, and have a great sheep and stock farm. We can get a good head man for overseer, and then we will raise prize merinoes, and have a herd of Dutch cattle, and of short-horns, and such stables as have not been imagined north of Pennsylvania. I have already selected the place, and only want you to approve the choice. . . . There is a lovely trout stream running through the farm; bordered with deep woods of beech and maple in which are great ledges of rock and enormous boulders covered with moss and ferns; the woods stretch up the hillside and from the top of the hill one can look anywhere, — even into Canaan. There is a sunny slope for the orchard, and the meadows stretch away smooth and green below. Here one can live in luxury on the salary of a German professor; — and here we would have our books as well as our farm, and would build on the solid earth of actual performance those castles which in Cambridge are only of the air. Here we would welcome the tax-gatherer as a messenger from our dear country, — we would not dread our annual bills; but we would live in content and in peace and grow old, loving each other. . . .

To J. R. Lowell

ASHFIELD, Sunday, September 30, 1866.

Now that you are never going to write to me again, I feel much more inclined to write to you. Heretofore there has been an inevitable sense of selfishness on my part. Henceforth there will be at least an intention of

generosity. But even supposing this new arrangement had been entered upon at the time of your visit, I should hardly have accomplished a letter to you between that time and this, for the days have been filled with occupations less pleasant for the most part and more peremptory. The last or almost the last of these was a week's visit from Mr. Harrison,[1] whom I found an interesting person. It is rare to find a man of so much earnestness and so much candour and charity, of so much enthusiasm and at the same time so much balance of mind. He spoke with strong feeling of your kindness to him, and with a manly appreciation of it that would have pleased you. . . .

I learned much from Harrison, — much about the West, and much of his own personal character that impressed me deeply.

It is a curious and interesting study of character to observe a man liberal by nature, but bred in the traditions and creed of narrowest and most bigotted orthodoxy, so that his whole life has been a struggle (in Harrison's case with external circumstances as well as internal) by which he has at last fairly achieved freedom. . . .

Curtis delivered his lecture on "Conservatism" — a new one which he has prepared for this winter's use — last Friday in the old Church here. It is an excellent

[1] In 1863, when Norton was editing the Broadsides for the Loyal Publication Society, he came into relation through correspondence with J. B. Harrison, then editor of a small country newspaper in Winchester, Indiana. In later years, at Norton's suggestion Harrison wrote his book called *Certain Dangerous Tendencies in American Life*, a work of great interest to the thoughtful reader; and it was he who did a large portion of the work — organized by Olmsted, Norton, and others — for the saving of Niagara.

and effective popular discourse; his skill in illustration is very great, and his purely rhetorical power seems to me to increase from year to year. He gave his lecture for the benefit of the Ashfield Library, — and for this same purpose I am delivering a course of four lectures, — the first, last Tuesday, was a reading from Longfellow, with some few remarks of my own, and the second, next Tuesday, is to be a reading of the same sort from Lowell. . . . My third lecture is to be on "Ashfield as it is and as it might be," — and I hope to make it serviceable to the good little town. . . .

Your pears are good; but think of my cauliflowers! Just after you were here they began to head beautifully, and their heads grew so big that any one of them could have worn Daniel Webster's hat; — and we have been eating them daily with the same gusto with which one eats exotics, — for they seem to be the first ever raised in Ashfield. . . .

To J. R. Lowell

ASHFIELD, October 19, 1866.

. . . What a pity it is, — and what a mistake, — that Mrs. Hawthorne did not accede to your condition and leave the writing of the life of her husband in your hands. It is difficult to understand how she could have fancied that you could do it without having his Diary and other papers in your hands to use as you might see fit, — subject if need be to her final judgment. Unless Hawthorne's biographer is to be free in the use of these materials no proper biography of him can be written.

I wrote to Emerson some time ago in your name as

well as my own, asking him to contribute regularly to the "Review." He sent me a most pleasant reply, and has promised to do so for a year, furnishing his first article for our next July number. We could have no more excellent contributor than he, and it is worth while to edit the "Review" as long as he and you will write for it. I trust you will write something, — say a literary article, for the next number. May I count on your doing so, in making up the number? After such a good one as the present it will not do to have any falling off.

Have you read this life of Percival?[1] It is an interesting and touching story, very poorly narrated. Percival had more of the weaknesses of genius than of genius itself. His sensitiveness, his morbid self-reference and self-esteem, the utter incompatibility between his temperament and his circumstances remind one, as Curtis said the other day, of Goethe's Tasso. His nerves were all on the outside, and our climate is very cruel to such a nature. His facility, his *versa*tility (I did not mean a pun, but it may serve to express the improvisational tendency of his rhyming faculty), his extraordinary susceptibility, his jealousy and vanity were all Italian, — and he was born a Yankee, and a Connecticut Yankee. Poor fellow! he had a hard time, and his life is a sad story.

I have been revising my "Vita Nuova" and hope to have it in type soon, and then to have some pleasant readings with Longfellow and you. . . .

[1] The "Life and Letters of James G. Percival," by Julius H. Ward, was published in 1866.

To Aubrey de Vere

CAMBRIDGE, March 25, 1867.

. . . Longfellow is busy with the final revision of his translation of the "Divina Commedia," of which the whole is to be published very soon. Every Wednesday evening Lowell and I meet at his house to consider with him the last touches of his work; and on Saturday evenings he and Lowell come to me to read over with me my translation of the "Vita Nuova," which is to appear as a companion volume to Longfellow's work. These evening studies are delightful; and after we have finished our work we have a little supper to which generally one or two other friends come in, and at which we always have a pleasant time. . . .

We are all well here. My little boy is now in perfect health.[1] . . .

To Miss Gaskell

ASHFIELD, July 14, 1867.

DEAREST META, — From what I see in the "Unitarian Herald" I infer that your Father is well, and is working hard as usual. I am interested in what I see in the "Herald" of the movement among the English Unitarians to liberalize Unitarianism, and to prevent it from degenerating into a narrow sectarianism. The movement corresponds with a similar one here. For me, I confess, that Unitarianism so far as it becomes sectarian loses worth and interest. In standing for

[1] Norton's oldest son had been desperately ill. His first two children were born at Shady Hill.

those doctrines which give its name to the denomination there is danger of losing hold of the larger truths of religion. The longer I live the more plainly I see that our systems of thought and belief do affect our character and life, and it is not because I regard the opinion, in respect to the nature of God, which divides Unitarianism from the orthodox churches, as unimportant, that my interest in the sect declines. Unitarianism as a doctrine has, I believe, the future of the world. So far as it stands for liberalism in theology and as a protest against dogma and creed, it seems to me to have nearly done its work. It is in danger of becoming itself a dogma, and of hardening into a church as exclusive as any other. It has inherited from the old churches the tendency to make religion an affair of the church. The deepest religious thought, the wisest religious life is outside of Unitarianism at present, is not to be found, indeed, within the limit of any churches. I cannot but think that our present church organization and services are in many, and essential, respects out of date. Our churches are formed now on a basis of unity of belief, whereas they should be formed on a basis of unity of spirit and of life. They make religion, or at least have a tendency to make people accept for religion, what is merely formal, conventional and ceremonial. . . .

Having established as a fundamental, the right of private judgment, and the utmost liberty of individual opinion, we can no longer unite men in a religious association based on conformity of doctrine. We must have a free Church, to which all who are seeking

the highest and best they know, and are trying to express their highest convictions in life, may come and be welcomed on equal terms, whether they call themselves Unitarians or Trinitarians, Christians or unbelievers. I look to see a church arise which shall be a natural human brotherhood, for the sake of promoting religious life and of securing by common effort and action, ends which as individuals its members would be unable to effect. It will be the glory of Unitarianism to have been the last step of the ascending series by which men reached at length the platform of the true Church Universal. I wonder how far you agree with all this. . . .

If you see the "Nation," as I hope you continue to do, there is little need of my saying anything to you about our public affairs. The editor of the "Nation" is a near and dear friend of mine, and we almost invariably agree in the views we take of public matters. I could but repeat what he has already said better than I could say it. . . .

To Miss Gaskell

CAMBRIDGE, October 28, 1867.

. . . I have had to use all my writing strength on a lecture which I had promised to deliver in Boston this week. I was glad to have an opportunity to say something of the intellectual shortcomings of America, and of the defects of American culture, to an audience such as that to which I shall speak, accustomed generally to hear little but laudation of our intellectual as well as our material progress, — and yet not unable to appre-

ciate in part at least, our need of higher culture and to be roused at least to desire it. The war, if it has not made the nation more thoughtful, has made it more serious and capable of thought, — . . . there are indications, stronger now than ever before, that we shall not be forever content with the mediocrity of diffused intelligence, but shall do our part to add to the stock of thoughts and to advance civilization, not merely by the practical application to institutions of old principles, but by the discovery of new and fruitful truth. At present our intellectual development is — so far as individual eminence and perfection is concerned — very unsatisfactory. We are still colonists and provincials in culture. . . .

To E. L. Godkin

CAMBRIDGE, January 31, 1868.

MY DEAR GODKIN, — . . . "The Nation" is a weekly comfort and satisfaction. I always read it with that sort of warm interest with which one reads the letter of a friend. It seems like a personal message from you to me; as if printed for my sake. I hear nothing but good of it. Emerson who has been cold toward it, who thought a mistake had been made in putting you at the head of it, spoke to me last week in warmest terms of its excellence, its superiority to any other journal we have or have had; its breadth, its variety, its self-sustainment, and its admirable style of thought and expression. It was the *amende honorable* made in his best of all possible ways.

I spent the night at his house after delivering my

lecture at Concord, and I had a delightful visit to him. His faith as shown in his life and conversation is beautiful. Last night he lectured here in Cambridge on the "Immortality of the Soul." It was one of his most consecutive performances, and full of fine suggestions and freedoms of thought. Perhaps the best in it, — at least what struck me most, — was this: — "The argument for immortality is always understated, — for the grounds on which it rests are convictions so subtile and interior, that words have no force adequate for their expression."

In November, 1867, Dickens was in Boston. Norton had met him in Paris in 1855, and now saw him often and familiarly. To these meetings he brought more than mere intellectual curiosity: as a boy he had indulged himself, when pocket-money permitted, in getting the successive blue-green paper-covered "parts" of the stories that have delighted whole generations since that time, and to Dickens the man, as to the author of "David Copperfield," Norton's heart went out. When in April, 1868, a "Press Dinner" was given to Dickens in New York, Norton was asked to represent the Boston Press, though, as he said in his speech, "I am not directly connected with it." A letter to Mrs. Andrews Norton describes the occasion.

To Mrs. Andrews Norton

NEW YORK,[1] April 19, 1868.

MY DEAREST MOTHER, — . . . I have had no adventures outside the house, except that on Friday evening

[1] Norton was staying with the Godkins.

I saw Dickens for a few minutes, and was glad to find him at least as well as when he left Boston, and that Susan and I heard him — that same evening — read "Dr. Marigold" to a dull audience. His reading was admirable. . . . Last night the quiet of life was broken by the dinner to Dickens, — and the dinner was on the whole so great a success that I could not but regret that it had not been made still more truly what it ought to have been by the presence and sympathy of more of the men who give character to such an occasion. The "Tribune" will have a full account of it, so I will not describe its general features to you. In the morning I received from the Committee a request to speak for the Boston Press, which I accepted, and prepared myself in thought for a speech which I knew must be in the main impromptu. . . .

Greeley sat in the middle with Dickens on his right, and next to Dickens was Raymond.[1] I sat at the end of the table on the left, and at my right was Mr. Parton.[2] . . . When Dickens rose he was greeted with tumultuous applause, and his speech was throughout received in the most hearty and expressive way. It was absolutely admirable; in tone, in manner, in feeling, in dignity it was all that could be desired. It was a really striking and delightful exhibition of character. . . . George,[3] who followed Raymond with a very carefully prepared speech, outdid himself, and spoke with more charm and effect than I ever heard in him before. . . . I

[1] Henry J. Raymond, of the New York *Times*.

[2] James Parton, journalist, and biographer of Franklin, Voltaire and others.

[3] G. W. Curtis.

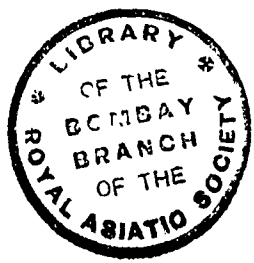
was very pleasantly received and made, I believe, a good speech. . . . The main part of what I said was as it were in answer to what Dickens had said in regard to the feeling of Englishmen towards Americans. . . . The fault of my speech was, perhaps, that it was on the whole too grave, but this is my common error, and the audience was certainly not as aware of it as I was. . . .

The funniest personal incident of the evening to me was that just after I had sat down a young man, of very New Yorkish appearance, came up to me and said, "I want to introduce myself to you, that I may tell you what a capital speech you made. My name is Stedman. Mr. Lowell has often spoken of you to me. I knew you were a scholar, but I fancied you were a muff; now I know you are a poet and a good fellow"!!

Here was surpassing grace, to which I replied modestly as became me. . . .

When Dickens left America, he and Norton parted as friends: it was within a year that they were to meet again at Gad's Hill. In July, 1868, Norton with his wife and children, accompanied, as he himself had been in 1855, by his mother and two sisters, sailed for Europe. This time he went as one who returned to familiar places and persons. The experience in which was interwoven the happiness and — in his wife's death — the deepest sorrow of his life, lasted for five years. His earlier visits had led to many delightful associations. Friendships already begun, interests of the greatest moment and enrichment for the remaining

half of his life, were now firmly established: opportunity to make new acquaintances among the most interesting persons in England was limited only by strength and inclination. From Norton's letters and journals it is easy to indicate by what a natural and obvious process — involving both temperament and general attitude to life — England came to hold the place it did in his affections and his outlook on the world.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CHAPTER VII

HOME LIFE IN EUROPE

(1868–1872)

MR. AND MRS. NORTON had been but a short time on English soil when they went by invitation to stay with Dickens at Gad's Hill — "the identical spot," as Dickens, in a letter to Lady John Russell, says about the house, "where Falstaff ran away." A letter written by Norton to his mother, from Gad's Hill, was devoted largely to his own search for a house, suited to the needs of his family and not too far from London; but it contains also passages of a wider interest.

To Mrs. Andrews Norton

GAD'S HILL PLACE
HIGHAM BY ROCHESTER, KENT
Sunday, August 9, 1868.

MY DEAREST MOTHER, — I wish you were here with us, to share in the pleasures of our visit to this delightful home, — and I wish I had leisure to write to you at real length of my various interesting experiences during the days since I left you. . . .

I spent Thursday evening as I have told you with Ruskin, and came back on Friday evening to Denmark Hill [1] where I spent the night. I was delighted to find Ruskin looking well — *quite unchanged* since we saw

[1] Ruskin's house, on the outskirts of London, where he lived till March, 1872, three months after his mother's death.

him, except perhaps for some lines of age, and in a perfectly sane and sweet condition of mind. No expressions could have been more full of affection than those he lavished upon me, and I had really a very happy time with him. He says he is much better this summer than for a long time before — and he is cheerful and hard at work. The house is wonderfully full of most wonderful and beautiful things. It is a treasure house of Turners. But all this must be left for talk when we meet.

After rather too fatiguing a morning in London, Sue and I met Dickens at the train at a little after two o'clock. He was most cordial and pleasant. We reached Gad's Hill about four and were received here by the family with delightful hospitality. The family now consists of Miss Dickens, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Collins and two little children,[1] (a girl a little older than Eliot, and a dear quaint little boy not quite so old as Sally,) Dickens's two youngest boys, (one of whom is going to Cambridge two months hence, and the other is going to Australia next month to join an elder brother who has been there for three or four years,) and Miss Hogarth, — this is the family, and staying here apparently on a very long visit is Mr. Henry Chorley. The whole family, together and individually, are peculiarly attractive and pleasant, and the life of the house seems to be entirely sweet and affectionate and simple. There is something very sad, indeed, in seeing poor Mr. Collins. He has been ill for a long time, and now seems to have but a few months to live. He is

[1] The children of Dickens's son Charles.

very gentle and patient and takes a pleasant part in all that goes on. Both Miss Dickens and Mrs. Collins are particularly refined and interesting women.

There was a dinner party in the evening, — made up of officers from the garrison at Chatham, and after the company had gone and the family had gone to bed Dickens and I had a long talk. This morning he proposed a walk, but I did not feel strong enough for it, — and you see how I have spent a good portion of the forenoon. To-morrow we go — Dickens, Miss Dickens, Susan and I, to Canterbury, — so that Sue will not get back to you till Tuesday night. I wish I were to see you then; but I must keep away till I get a house.[1] . . .

After the visit to Dickens, a few days spent with the Gaskells in Manchester, and a brief stay at Oxford, the Nortons established themselves at Keston Rectory near Bromley — in Kent — and not far from the Darwins at Down. The acquaintance and friendly intercourse with the Darwin family at this time grew to a closer intimacy when, in 1877, Charles Darwin's eldest son, William, married Sara Sedgwick, Mrs. Charles Norton's younger sister. Frederic Harrison, living in these years with his father at Eden Park, where Gibbon once stayed, was also a neighbour of the Nortons; they met at Eden Park, and the mutual regard which then drew the English Comtist and the liberal American together was of a sort to last through life.[2]

[1] Later, in Italy, Mrs. Norton wrote a fuller account of this visit to Gad's Hill, with many details throwing light upon the personality of Dickens. See *Scribner's Magazine*, April, 1913.

[2] See *Among my Books*, by Frederic Harrison (1912) containing a paper

At Keston the Nortons spent several months of great content, but for a somewhat severe illness which for several weeks in the autumn confined Norton to his room. In a letter to Miss Gaskell (August 14, 1868) he describes the place: —

"After much search I have found this house, in the midst of truly delightful and most English scenery. We are literally close to a little old country church, within a stone's throw of a great finely wooded park (lately Lord Cranworth's) and within a quarter of a mile of a very wide upland common covered with heath and furze, and with a beautiful view over the pleasant country of Surrey and far away up to London. The house is a nice, quiet, ugly old-fashioned brick rectory, with superb trees close by it, and standing on a pretty little terrace above a garden."

Writing to Lowell, two weeks later, Norton says more of "the pleasant country of Surrey," in words reminding one of the "deeper familiarity" which the young Americans of Kipling's delightful story, "An Habitation Enforced," found in just such surroundings.

To J. R. Lowell

KESTON RECTORY,
BROMLEY, KENT, August 30, 1868.

Would you were here this Sunday evening! Would you had been here all day to walk with us among the oaks of Holwood Park, or over the lovely fields and

on "Charles Eliot Norton." This tribute by a friend gives a vivid impression of Norton and his wife in 1868.

through the still lovelier lanes of this most rurally picturesque and characteristic of English neighbourhoods. Just think how much of England we have here, — first the county itself, Chaucer's county; then the great place close by us, Pitt's home where he had gone bird's-nesting in his youth, and to which he came in his later life from choice, — then a great Roman camp, and in the fields next to ours the remains of some Roman villas; then a great wide upland common with windmills on it, and covered with heather and gorse; then such lanes as are hardly to be matched in England; and meadows and fields and hills and dales the sweetness and tenderness of whose curves and slopes, the delicacy of whose lines, the exquisite variety of whose soft sweeps is something quite unknown to our own dear country where Nature seems to have been in a hurry to finish her work, and left much in block instead of completing it with the final touches of artistic feeling and lingering affection; then picturesque farm houses and farm yards such as we used to see in picture books, and great ricks of straw, and flocks of sheep, and coveys of partridges, and rabbits in all the banks, and sparrows and finches and starlings in all the hedges, — and everywhere that old world look and those old world things which in spite of their novelty and strangeness have for me, — and for you too, — a deeper familiarity than the very things that have lain before our eyes since we were born. . . .

In Norton's journal there is an account of his first meeting at this time with G. H. Lewes.

OXFORD, August, 1868.

Mr. Lewes came to Oxford to the meeting of the British Medical Association and stayed with Dr. Acland. Breakfast with us.

He gave us an account of his wife's beginnings in novel-writing. Often, he said, she had been asked to write, "and often friends had said to me — your wife ought to write. I always answered, 'there's no question she has more talent than any of us, but whether in that direction, I don't know.'

"Moreover, we were very poor, (living at Wimbledon in one room, where I had my little table with my microscope making my observations, and my wife another, close at hand, where she wrote;) we were trying to pay off debts; and were so poor, that I remember well as we crossed the Common one morning, saying to her: 'You and I ought to live better than we do, we'll begin to have beer for lunch'! A little after this, I said to her, 'suppose you should try and write a story,' and some days later she showed me the first pages of 'Amos Barton.' 'That's very nice as far as it goes, but you've got yet to show what you can do in pathos,' I said to her. But one day when I was going up to London, and just as I was leaving, my wife said to me, 'I wish you would not come back till night,' and so, of course, I did not go back till night, and that evening she read to me the account of Milly's death. 'That will do,' I said to her, 'there's no doubt any longer as to what you can accomplish.'"

Telling this, Mr. Lewes's eyes filled with tears, and through all this talk he seemed as sensitive and quick

in his emotions as a woman. His appearance is very peculiar, and indicates physical delicacy. He is very slightly built, his hands full of nervous expression as well as his face, and constantly used in gesticulation. His face is very plain, pitted with small-pox, — dark, handsome, feeling eyes, but worn, and with a sadness and waywardness of expression that at times takes the place of the more than common sentiment. His nose and mouth are exceedingly irregular, and straggly, thin moustaches and beard, combined with long, ragged hair, guiltless of a brush, quite serve to de-Anglicize his appearance. A collar which, though white, was crumpled, was nearly hidden by a loose, slovenly black scarf, tied loosely and slipping round to one side.

He talks, as may be seen, greatly of himself and his wife, and often with what might be offensive conceit, were it not so entertaining and having an air of frank, vigorous analysis of character rather than ordinary self-engrossment. His appearance, as he entered our parlour, where we sat at breakfast, had more of the sprightly, alert style of a Frenchman than is common. In fact, he seems throughout un-English, and talks of England as one quite removed from the conventions and prejudices of society. He and his wife have just returned from the Black Forest, Freiburg, where they went into seclusion immediately upon the publication of the "Spanish Gypsy," — she, dreading more and more, he says, to be exposed to publicity of any kind, and especially to the social criticism and applause she could not fail to meet with in London. He said, "We just go off by ourselves, and see no one and speak to

nobody for weeks. Of course they talk about us, and say 'that's the man and woman, who are always up on the tops of the mountains, and always so "innig" together.'"

To John Ruskin

September 9, 1868. KESTON RECTORY.

. . . Everything goes on quietly and pleasantly with us here. Goldwin Smith has been passing several days with us. He is doing admirable service for the liberal cause, and I cannot but regret that he is about to leave England at this time. But I can say little to keep him back. I should (I fear) go were I in his place. . . .

We have seen Darwin several times during the last ten days. He is a delightful person from his simplicity, sweetness and strength. . . . His face is massive, with little beauty of feature but much of expression. He has a lively humour, and a cheerful, friendly manner. I hope you will return soon enough to meet him here. . . .

To John Ruskin

September 19 [1868]

. . . The days continue to go pleasantly with us, — a little too much broken in upon by society. . . . I went up last Sunday to The Grange[1] and spent that day with the Joneses. . . . Their house has an atmosphere of its own, quite different from any which I had ever before found in London. In the course of my brief visit I saw a good deal of Morris, who combines in a

[1] Edward Burne-Jones's house.

wonderful measure the solid earthly qualities of the man of practical affairs, with the fine perceptions and quick fancy of the poet. It was pleasant to see a famous author so simple, and so little of a prig. . . .

I have got some more of the Liber Studiorums, — a fair impression of the Jason for myself, and am getting more and more devoted to Turner. . . .

In October of 1868 Norton spent a few days, in Paris and northern France, with Ruskin — days of which the following passages from letters to Mrs. Norton give some account.

To Mrs. C. E. Norton

PARIS, HOTEL MEURICE, October 6, 1868.

It is not quite six o'clock in the evening, my dearest Susan, and I have just returned from Chartres whither I went this morning at eight. The day has been beautiful, and I have enjoyed greatly the sight of the magnificent cathedral. All my old impressions of its preëminent beauty have been confirmed. It is one of the noblest works that men have ever made, and its supreme qualities are all the more striking to me from their contrast with those of the great and picturesque church of Abbeville; the difference between a complete work of the highest imagination, and a work of the liveliest fancy, — between the unconscious display of genius and the self-conscious exhibition of talent. There is a grandeur, nobility, dignity and repose about Chartres which are not supplied by the richness and the animation of Abbeville. . . .

Ruskin will be here now, very soon. To-night or to-morrow night I propose to go to the Porte St. Martin where George Sand's play of "Cadio" has just been brought out with considerable success. There would be a chance of seeing her and this is my temptation to go, — for I never saw her but once, many years ago. That early time was at an amateur charity concert — a concert of the *plus haute noblesse*, at which Rachel recited a scene from "Athalie" (I think), and where she was it was impossible to care much for the presence of any other woman. I remember now the thrill with which I almost touched her hand as I dropped my bit of gold into the velvet bag with which she made her personal *quête* among the audience. Dear me! I should like to see her again. . . .

11 o'clock. Ruskin and I have had dinner and taken a walk, and while we were standing by a bookstall on the Boulevards who should come up but Sam Longfellow. He told me they were all at the Windsor, and I shall see Longfellow to-morrow, and ask him to dine with us, for Ruskin would like to see him, having a great admiration of his capacity of saying beautiful things at the level of the broad public. . . .

To Mrs. C. E. Norton

HOTEL MEURICE, PARIS, October 7, 1868.

. . . This morning after breakfast Longfellow came in and sat with us for an hour, sweet and cordial as could be; then we went to the Louvre. . . . We came away tired and lunched, and then went to the Japanese shop which Whistler frequents and where is a wonder-

ful collection of beautiful and rare work, and where I expounded to Ruskin a little of the Japanese art, of which he knew absolutely nothing, as it is shown in their handicraft. Then we drove to the Bois . . . and at eight o'clock went to the Français to hear "Tartuffe" and "Le Barbier de Seville." . . .

It was not long after Norton's return from France that he was attacked by the illness which was the only unfortunate episode of the stay at Keston. A passage from a letter of Dickens to Mrs. Norton (November 5, 1868) illustrates his warm interest in the transplanted household: "I am indeed concerned to read your account of Mr. Norton's illness and to think of your own personal anxieties in a strange country, so far from home. Give him my affectionate love (keeping a large share of it for yourself) and tell him how truly my heart is with him and with you, and how grateful I shall be for better and further tidings of him."

Other friends showed their affectionate kindness, in terms as genuine, if not so expressive, as those of Dickens's keenly sympathetic nature.

The winter of 1868–1869 was spent in London. In Norton's letters of this time there are glimpses of the old and new friends he was meeting.

To J. R. Lowell

QUEEN'S GATE TERRACE, LONDON
New Years Day, 1869.

. . . Browning, whom I have seen but once, seems to be the freshest, most ardent, and most unconven-

tionally individual man in society. We dined two days ago with the Leslie Stephens, meeting Tyndall, Froude, and Fitzjames Stephen. Tyndall lays himself out to charm the ladies, by dropping science and taking to sentiment, which he pours forth with a delicious breadth of Irish brogue, — "Ah! the mountain tops, 't is there that man fales himself nearest the devine. I always sakes the mountain tops for relafe from the tile and care of the wurrld. Do ye remimber Emerson's poem of 'Monadnock'? Let me quote some lines with which me heart is in sympathy. (He quotes with true Celtic fervour.) Ye might not suspict it, but Emerson is me favourite poet. I was up this morning at six o'clock, and what book was me choice to begin the day wid but Emerson's poems. . . ."

Fitzjames Stephen [1] strikes me as the clearest- and strongest-minded man I have met here. He has a big frame and a big, solid head, and already wears the look of a Chief Justice or Lord Chancellor. There is a most satisfactory air about him of capacity for doing hard work easily. He is simple in manner without pretense, and without overbearingness. He talks well, and tells a good story with effect. Although intellectualized to a degree of hardness common among English, or rather London men who are much in society, he has a heart, and shows it now and then in a dash of humour in which sentiment if it be not present

[1] [Sir] James Fitzjames Stephen, Leslie Stephen's older brother, who was then occupied with law and journalism in London. From 1869 to 1872 he served as legal member of Council for India; appointed to a judgeship in 1879. Author of *A History of the Criminal Law of England*, and other works.

is at least implied. He is a great friend of Carlyle's, and walks with him often on Sunday afternoons. He says Carlyle is habitually in a state of very cheerful despondency, appropriate to the most wilfully dyspeptic man in Her Majesty's Dominions. He is growing old, and has to be humoured a good deal. He is more extravagant in talk than ever; but one would rather hear him talk for two hours than any other man in London, — "and, besides, he is so kind, with a real hearty kindness," — and he has —

I do not know how that sentence was to be finished, for Eliot came running into my room in breathless eagerness to take me to see a Punch who was performing in front of our windows. I take as great a delight in Punches as he does, — and there are but few of them left. This is only the second that I have seen since we came to England, and it will not be many years before Punch disappears as a living character altogether, or will be supported only as the Stage Coach is, as a fancy by some rich fellow who does not know how to spend his money. Indeed as England grows richer and poorer, as riches collect together in a heap on one side, and poverty huddles together in a mass on the other, and there seems to be scarcely a passageway of communication between them, the old traditions and customs die out, and even fun and cheerfulness diminish till little is left of them. Charles Lamb's London, the London sights and shows of Hone's Every Day Book are almost wholly gone, and with them the great city has lost many of its best individual characteristics. . . .

JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, ABOUT 1865

After lunching at the Deanery of Westminster with Dean Stanley and Lady Augusta Stanley, Norton wrote in his journal:

January, 1869.

. . . It would be hard to find a man more fitted by natural taste and acquired learning for such a home than Dean Stanley. His strong historic sympathies give him the keenest satisfaction in the crowded associations and memories of the place, and I was never taken over any memorable house by a cicerone more entirely such as one would desire for a guide, mingling as he did archæology and history and literary reminiscences and modern politeness in the most agreeable proportions. It was the way and the place to see him at his best. From the library he took us to the dining-room hung round with his famous predecessors, then through long, narrow, dark passages to the Jerusalem Chamber; but the most interesting scene of all, and one really impressive, was when the Dean took us to a small gallery, built in old times for the Abbot, just over the Poet's Corner, and we looked down from it into the Abbey itself. The only light was that which a single lamp held by a servant gave us, and that from the city lamps outside, which came in through the opposite windows of the transept. The great pillars of the transept and the white statues below could be dimly seen; but it was all vast, and solemn and sacred. And then we turned back to the drawing-room where Eliot and Sally and Lily, who had been spending the afternoon with some of their contemporaries at the Deanery, were turning somersaults over the sofas. . . .

To G. W. Curtis

LONDON, January 29, 1869.

. . . The official and purely aristocratic and fashionable world is mainly out of London till parliament meets, about the middle of February, but the literary people are here, and we see in one way or another a good many of them.

I wish I knew whom you would like best to hear of. . . . I am divided between telling you of a most interesting visit at the Deanery of Westminster last week, . . . [and] of a lunch on Sunday at their house with George Eliot and George Lewes.

We met Lewes at Oxford last Summer, and as soon as we came to London he came to see us, and asked us to come and see his wife, saying that she never made calls herself, but was always at home on Sunday afternoons. She is an object of great interest and great curiosity to society here. She is not received in general society, and the women who visit her are either so émancipée as not to mind what the world says about them, or have no social position to maintain. Lewes dines out a good deal, and some of the men with whom he dines go without their wives to his house on Sundays. No one whom I have heard speak, speaks in other than terms of respect of Mrs. Lewes, but the common feeling is that it will not do for society to condone so flagrant a breach as hers of a convention and a sentiment (to use no stronger terms) on which morality greatly relies for support. I suspect society is right in this. . . .

After a while, as Susan did not call, an invitation came for her and me to lunch, and this we very readily accepted. The Leweses live in the St. John's Wood district, not far from Regent's Park. Their house, called The Priory is a little, square, two-story dwelling standing in a half garden, surrounded with one of those high brick walls of which one grows so impatient in England.

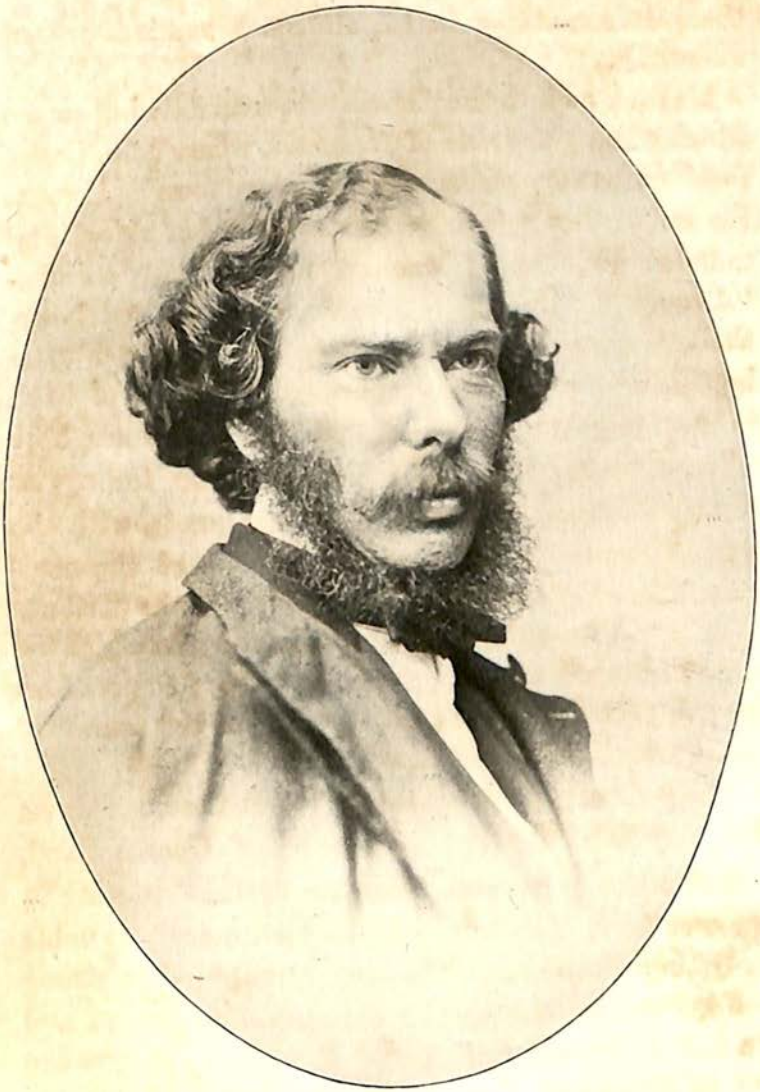
Lewes received us at the door with characteristic animation; he looks and moves like an old-fashioned French barber or dancing-master, very ugly, very vivacious, very entertaining. You expect to see him take up his fiddle and begin to play. His talk is much more French than English in its liveliness and in the grimace and gesture with which it is accompanied, — all the action of his mind is rapid, and it is so full that it seems to be running over. "Oh, if you like to hear stories," he said one day, "I can tell you stories for twelve hours on end."

It is just the same if you like to hear science, or philosophy. His acquirements are very wide, wider, perhaps, than deep, but the men who know most on special subjects speak with respect of his attainments. I have heard both Darwin and Sir Charles Lyell speak very highly of the thoroughness of his knowledge in their departments. In fact his talents seem equal to anything. But he is not a man who wins more than a moderate liking from you. He has the vanity of a Frenchman; his moral perceptions are not acute and he consequently often fails in social tact and taste. He has what it is hard to call a vulgar air, but at least

there is something in his air which reminds you of vulgarity.

He took us into the pleasant cheerful drawing-rooms which occupy one side of the house, where Mrs. Lewes received us very pleasantly, — and we soon had lunch, the only other person present being his eldest and married son. Lunch was set in the study, a cheerful room like the others, lined with well-filled bookshelves, save over the fire-place where hung a staring likeness and odious, vulgarizing portrait of Mrs. Lewes. Indeed all the works of art in the house bore witness to the want of delicate artistic feeling, or good culture on the part of the occupants, with the single exception, so far as I observed, of the common lithograph of Titian's "Christ of the Tribute Money." The walls of the drawing-room in which we sat after lunch were adorned with proof impressions (possibly the original drawings, I am not sure) of the illustrations to "Romola."

The portrait of Mrs. Lewes reminded me, not by its own merit, of Couture's drawing of George Sand, — and there is a strong likeness to this drawing in her own face. The head and face are hardly as noble as George Sand's, but the lines are almost as strong and masculine; the cheeks are almost as heavy, and the hair is dressed in a similar style, but the eyes are not so deep, and there is less suggestion of possible beauty and possible sensuality in the general contour and in the expression. Indeed one rarely sees a plainer woman; dull complexion, dull eye, heavy features. For the greater part of two or three hours she and I



G. H. LEWES

talked together with little intermission. Her talk was by no means brilliant. She said not one memorable thing, but it was the talk of a person of strong mind who had thought much and who felt deeply, and consequently it was more than commonly interesting. Her manner was too intense, she leans over to you till her face is close to yours, and speaks in very low and eager tones; nor is her manner perfectly simple. It is a little that, or it suggests that, of a woman who feels herself to be of mark and is accustomed, as she is, to the adoring flattery of a coterie of not undistinguished admirers. In the course of the afternoon three or four men came in, — the only one whom I knew was Professor Beesly.[1] We came away just before sunset. . . . Every one who knows Mrs. Lewes well seems attached to her, and those who know speak in the warmest terms of her relations to her husband and his family, — of her good sense and her goodness.

"Harper's Weekly" gives me, my dearest George, or rather its second and third pages give me every week a great deal of satisfaction. Affairs at home seem to be going on quite as well, except in New York, as one could expect or even desire. Grant grows daily in my respect and confidence. It is a great blessing to have such a type as he affords of the military hero, — so simple, so sensible, so strong, and so magnanimous. Poor Reverdy[2] is muddling affairs and opinions over here to a shocking extent, and forces one to preach the true doctrine in opposition to his setting forth of the

[1] Edward Spencer Beesly, positivist, was then professor of history in University College London, and of Latin in Bedford College, London.

[2] Reverdy Johnson, United States Minister to Great Britain, 1868–69.

false. We are not much understood yet. Even the genuine liberals can not conceive of the virtue of our practical democracy. I often wish for you to help me in my talks with men who, I fear, conceive that I am something of an enthusiast, and who find it difficult to distinguish between the just confidence of an enlightened American in the principles of our system, and the boastfulness of the politicians and orators who have done so much to hurt the cause they were professing to maintain. . . .

We have had a long and delightful visit from Baron Mackay.[1] He is the most engaging of youths, — as sweet a fellow as lives. Good-night. Here is the last photograph of old Rossini. . . .

God bless you and yours!

Ever your loving

C. E. N.

To J. R. Lowell

February 22, 1869.

. . . Last night Susan, Jane and I dined with Forster and his wife, who live in a fine house very near to us. . . . He has grown into a marked "character," — his old peculiarities have strengthened, and he is one of the most genial, humorous, good-naturedly choleric and blustering of Englishmen. He asks me often about you, and last night, hearing of your birthday, he bade me send you his kindest regards and cordial

[1] Later Lord Reay, Governor of Bombay Presidency (1885–90); president Royal Asiatic Society, etc., etc. In earlier years he had been in America and stayed with the Nortons at Shady Hill. This early acquaintance ripened into lifelong friendship.

good wishes. His library is the pleasantest room in a private house which I have seen in London. He built it for himself, and it is large enough to hold 18,000 volumes. It is high, and a gallery runs round it, reached by a stairway in one corner, so that all the books are easily at hand. The collection is really a splendid one. Such books as there are in it! The first folio, I mean the folio of 1623, which is to you and me in the true sense the *first*. The copy of the "Dunciad" which Pope gave to Swift, with Pope's inscription in it; from Swift it went to Warburton, from him to Mason, at length it came to Rogers and from him through Daniels to Forster. Addison's "Letters from Italy" with his inscription to Swift, as "the greatest genius" of the time. Johnson's "Lives of the Poets," — the proof-sheets, — crammed with Johnson's corrections and emendations.[1] A whole heap of Swift's account books and memorandum books, filled with most characteristic entries; and such a collection of manuscripts and letters of the Civil War time as I had never seen before.

We could but look at a very few, — at a most interesting letter of Strafford's, very long and written in admirable English; a series of letters of Charles I to Prince Rupert; a very striking letter of Cromwell's, with a memorable sentence about the studies he wished his son to pursue, such as mathematics and history, "for such studies may fitt him for public services unto which every man is born."

[1] The "Norton Collection" in Harvard University Library shows that Norton and John Forster could well sympathize in the love of rare and interesting books.

Forster gave me the first volume of his "Life of Landor" to read, — the two volumes are to be published in April, — and I have been looking it over with great interest to-day. It is very well done, and is full of good matter. It fills out what we knew before of Landor, without altering the general impression and effect of his character, and it adds his letters to what we had before of his writings. It is a book you will like. . . .

A month later Norton's journal gives account of his first meeting with Carlyle.

March 23.

I went last evening with Grant Duff, Professor Tyndall and a friend of the latter, . . . to see Carlyle. Tyndall is a special friend of the old man and it was he who arranged our visit. We reached Carlyle's house on Cheyne Row, Chelsea, not far from the river side, about half past eight. It is a small, old-fashioned, modest dwelling. The neat maid who opened the door told us her master was out taking his evening walk, but that he expected us and would soon return. In the parlour upstairs we found a pleasant looking elderly lady, a Miss Welsh, whom from her name I take to be a sister of Mrs. Carlyle, — and a young lady, a Miss Aitken, a niece of Carlyle's who lives much with him and who looks like the New England country niece who might come down to the city to take care of an old Uncle. We had hardly had time more than enough to say a few words to the ladies, and to see that the room had a pleasant and domestic

look, the walls being hung thickly with paintings and engravings, when Carlyle came in, in look like his recent photographs, save that there is less of despair and despondency in his actual countenance, and less wildness and uncouthness in his hair and aspect generally. His frame is large, his head is heavy and seems to have bent his broad shoulders, but there is nothing either in look or manner to suggest the feebleness of age. He is seventy-four years old, but he seems younger than his years. His hair is iron grey and he was dressed in a gray woolen wrapper buttoned round his chest and falling like a long dressing gown to his very feet, which were cased in slippers. No one could see him without being impressed by the massive shape and strong lines of his countenance and with the force and brilliancy of his deep-set eyes. He received us quietly and pleasantly, with a certain air of shyness, I fancied; and sitting down by the tea table, at once began to talk to Grant Duff, who was next him, with the peculiar Scotch intonation and pronunciation which Tom Appleton and Mr. Dickens and Mr. James have imitated so well,[1] — "So, now your convocation of discoursers has begun again, and they tell me there's been great speech-making among your chiefs aboot some question or ither o' the Irish Church. I've not read a single word of their discourses, save and

[1] Since a portion of Norton's record of Carlyle's conversation has been printed in *Scribner's Magazine*, Mr. Alexander Carlyle (Carlyle's representative) has pointed out the fact that it does not reproduce his uncle's speech with phonetic accuracy. Nevertheless the forms of Norton's diary are retained almost intact, as representing better than any complete reconstruction could do the impression which Carlyle's words, as uttered, made upon Norton.

exceptin' always two sentences of the speech of Mr. Gladstone which I fell on by accident in "Punch's" Mirror of Parliament, and I could almost forgeeve Mr. Disraeli for his misuse of his gift of speech if it be true that he said what I heard told of him, as he was coming away from the house after hearing Mr. Gladstone's speech: 'that there was one thing in his plan which was very creditable to Mr. Gladstone, "that he had been so good to his own class, namely, the lunatics!" ' But if I were to tell you my whole mind on this subject and to say what I think of the miserable degradation of the faculties of man in such a convocation of discoursers, I'm afraid ye wud think I forgot you were one of them yourself." Then he went on to lament "that a man should be so immodest and so despiteful to the god within him as to open all the secret beauties of his soul and to concentrate his force on turning what should be the sacred source of all the virtues into the mere glaze and varnish of his outside and in finding satisfaction in the skilful practise of play-acting or hypocrisy. For a long time I was puzzled to make out what Demosthenes meant by his Action, action, action! which most people think to mean the mere phrenitic flinging about of hands and arms, but I looked up the matter in Valerius Maximus and in Cicero, and I found that the word used was ὑπόκρισις or 'play-acting,' and that this was the sorry meaning that the great maxim possessed."

So he went on till some one asked him if he had seen Browning lately. "Na," said he, with a twinkle in his eye, "but I've read the whole of his new poem, 'The

Ring and the Book' in four volumes, from beginning to end, without omitting a word, and a most extraordinary production it is; — a work of great ingenuity and full of verra strikin' sentences. I met Browning, indeed, in Piccadilly the other day, and I told him I'd read his poem from the first word thereof way to the last, and he said to me, quickly, 'Well! Well?' and I replied that I thought it a book of prodigious talent and unparallelled ingenuity; but then, I suppose trusting to the sincerity of my own thoughts, I went on to say that of all the strange books produced on this distracted airth, by any of the sons of Adam this one was altogether the strangest and the most preposterous in its construction; and where, said I, do ye think to find the eternal harmonies in it? Browning did not seem to be pleased with my speech, and he bade me good morning."

All this talk was lightened by the play of Carlyle's face and by the laugh with which he showed his own sense of the fun in the sallies of his extravagance or his humour. He would seem to be desperately in earnest in his objurgations when the humour would surprise him, as it were, in spite of himself and he had to give way to it. Going on with his talk about Browning, he said; "I used to know Browning when he was a youth of considerable promise. He'd just written 'Paracelsus,' an ineffectual thing, and he seemed to have set his heart on the gift of silence. He was living with his parents at a pretty place, somewhere between London and Croydon, a quiet place, which has since become a mere yelling and screaming concatenation of iron lines." . . .

He spoke of having been some time ago at Monaco and the gambling house there reminded him of the gambling house at Hombourg. "I spent some days at Hombourg. The Land-Graf is an old man, the last of six brothers, and they none of them had heirs; and this old man lives in a little house and leaves the Schloss uninhabited. I went there and wanderin' through the rooms, I came to have a strong feeling about one of the daughters of George III, who had married long ago one of the Land-Grafs and had lived in this Schloss. Never before had I cared for George III or for any of his children, but when I reflected on the immensity of the ennui and weariness of this poor woman's life, and saw how she strove to endure it in some kind of noble and pious fashion, I came to have a sort of regard and affection for so forlorn a creature. All round her room were portraits of her brothers and sisters and pictures of Windsor and the places she'd known as a child, and there was a portrait of her old father, which she had sent for, after he had become blind and lunatic; that she might see just how he looked; but when it came she could not bear to open it and she put it by the head of her bed in its case; and there it was found at her death. Truly, a good, pious creature." . . .

He said he remembered reading Franklin's "Treatise on Electricity" when he was at College; "a quarto volume, which I found in the College Library, and there was no book that I read at that time which made a deeper impression on me. I count him among the most sensible of the sons of men, a verra large and open mind, with a gift of genius which could do its work

with a sixpenny worth of string and an old key, while the French philosophers were building a tower to get at the clouds." . . .

It was half-past ten when we came away. The old man came down to the door with us and out on the step, where he stood talking, bareheaded, in the moonlight, leaning forward, with one hand raised, as he urged upon Tyndall the consideration of a new theory he had propounded as to the cause of the internal heat of the earth. It was a striking and picturesque view of him.

The other day by the Queen's command he and Browning, and Sir Charles and Lady Lyell, and Mr. and Mrs. Grote, were invited to meet the Queen at lunch at Dean Stanley's. Carlyle, according to Browning's report, did most of the talking, talking about the rich and the poor and expressing himself with his usual force. After lunch the Queen spoke to Browning and, after telling him of the interest she had in his wife's poetry, ended her talk with him by saying, "What a very singular person Mr. Carlyle is!" She had never seen him before.

To Chauncey Wright

LONDON, 18 QUEEN'S GATE TERRACE.
May 1, 1869.

. . . Jane and Grace have kept you pretty well informed regarding the general course of events with us in London. But of some of my special pleasures and interests in which they have not been able to share, they can have given you but little knowledge. One of

the chief of these was a dinner with Mr. Mill at his house at Blackheath, to which Susan and I went about a month ago. Shortly after we reached England last summer Mr. Mill went to Avignon. He had already written most kindly to me saying that he hoped to see me in the autumn on his return to England. But when he came back for the election I was ill, and was unable to see him during his short stay in the country. In the course of the autumn and winter I received several very interesting letters from him, — mainly with regard to the social and political condition and prospects of England. He takes a more hopeful view of affairs than I am able to do, and sees in the great moral changes which have taken place during the last few years the promise of peaceful progress in improvement and reform. He believes that the evils of the state have not become too great for legal remedy, and that there is sufficient moral energy and sense of responsibility in the ruling and powerful and rich class to lead to the application of the measures necessary to bring about a healthier condition of society.

I am quite aware that an intelligent American is very likely to overestimate the dangers resulting from the apparent division of classes, the unequal distribution of power and wealth, the wretched condition of the mass of the productive portion of the population, the increase of poverty, and the inefficiency of the government. But after studying the conditions of the country as well as my opportunities have admitted, and estimating as justly as I am able the sources of erroneous conclusions, I am only confirmed in some of the

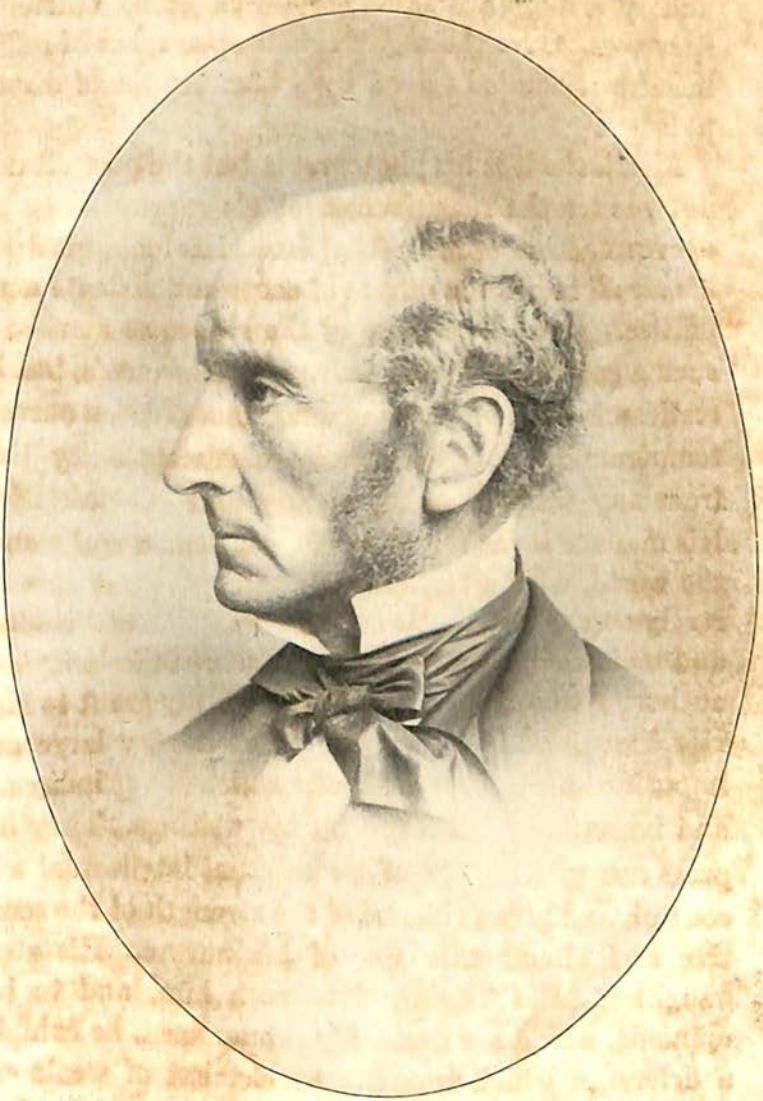
strongest of my first impressions, and I cannot but believe that social evils in England are of such enormous magnitude, and so dependent on the principles on which the existing organization of society depends, and from which the existing system of government draws its strength, that the question is imminent whether the nation is to decline into a state of chronic decrepitude, or to be redeemed by a more or less violent revolution which shall complete the work left unfinished by the Cromwellian period, and restore vigour and common life to the various classes which are now arrayed against each other in the weakness of divided interests and uncertain counsels. You will see some of the grounds of my opinion very imperfectly set forth, and insufficiently detailed, in a paper[1] which I shall send Gurney next week for the July "North American."

But this is not Mr. Mill. On his return from Avignon in March, to spend a few weeks here, he came to see us, but we unfortunately were out and missed his visit, and then he sent a pleasant note to ask Susan and me to dine with him on a Sunday. Blackheath Park, where he lives, is some seven or eight miles from London, and we went out by train to the station half a mile from his house. The house itself is a square, plain, brick house, in a little plot of ground, of about the size of one of the Kirkland Street places, but with a characteristically English air and look in its seclusion behind a wall, and trim thick shrubbery, and the ivy covering one side

[1] This long and carefully considered article, "The Poverty of England," appeared in the "North American" for July, 1869.

and affording a shelter for innumerable twittering sparrows. Over the way is a wide open space of rolling meadow bounded far off by a blue outline of distant hills.

Mill looks like his photograph, but the portrait does not render the sensitiveness of his expression or the nervous action of his refined face. His look, his dress, his air all indicate a nature of acute and delicate sensibilities. There is nothing of the repose so marked in such a countenance and bearing as Emerson's, but his restlessness seems to spring much more from a nervous temperament and fine feminine susceptibility than from any want of moral dignity and self-possession. His manner is entirely that of a gentleman and man of the world, with a tender grace and sweetness about it rarely met with. . . . He is entirely simple, and modest, and makes no claim to the position of superiority and authority which most men would readily grant to him. His expression and manner reveal a very large and important part of his character which is but indirectly and imperfectly indicated by his writings. They impress one with a sense of his habitual intellectual self-control, and give evidence of the strength of the sensitive and affectionate side of his nature. His step-daughter, Miss Taylor, lives with him, and to her opinions, which are decidedly pronounced, he exhibits a deference which suggests an element of weakness. . . . There is nothing epigrammatic, or strained in Mill's talk. It is like the talk of any other intelligent, liberal, well-bred man. Its most interesting characteristic to me was just this; was, in fact, that there was



JOHN STUART MILL

nothing specially memorable in it; that it was marked by good sense and strong moral feeling rather than distinguished for brilliancy or point. It was interesting because the man himself was interesting. It showed, indeed, in its range the variety and liveliness of his sympathies, and the quickness of his perceptions, — but had you been listening to it, without knowing who the man was that was talking, you would not have learned from it that he was Mill, though you would have been sure that he was a man of powerful intellect, and of a well-trained mind. Of course I speak of the general tenor of the talk, for there were some references to himself which would have revealed him. It was the sympathetic side of his nature that was most evident in it, the keenness of his moral susceptibilities, and the chivalrous quality of his disposition. I was reminded of what Fitzjames Stephen had said to me, that one who knew Mill only through his writings knew but half of him, and that not the best half. If one saw much of him affection would soon equal respect for him.

We did not see him again, for he went back to Avignon in a few days. . . .

Keep well, my dear fellow. We all join in affectionate remembrances of you.

Ever affectionately Yours,

C. E. Norton.

Before the end of May Norton left England for the continent. Established in Switzerland, with his family, he writes, in the long letter which follows, about Carlyle in the first months of their acquaintance.

To Miss E. C. Cleveland

LAUSANNE, June 7, 1869.

. . . Carlyle is always entertaining and original to a degree of which no description, (not even the excellent one of Mr. Henry James,) can convey an adequate expression. His great quality is humour, and like other humorists, even in his most serious moods his mind retains a certain playfulness, which finds vent in grim jokes and extravagant exaggerations. He is rarely to be taken *au pied de la lettre*. In fact, just what a reader of his books would judge him to be, one finds him in actual presence, only "a little more so"; more vigorous in expression, more unrestrained by the ordinary conventions of language and manners; in fact a great "chartered libertine" who has won for himself permission to say what he likes and in his own way without let or hindrance, and with genius enough to secure an audience almost as obsequious as that which listened to Dr. Johnson. Carlyle is the Court-jester of the century; instead of talking to the King he prints his "After Niagara" [1] and his "smoky chimney" apologue.[2]

To a stranger in no wise immediately responsible to the society in which he is living for a time, nothing can be more entertaining than to listen to Carlyle's free talk and often hard sayings about men and things. But to people who form part of the society, and who

[1] Carlyle's essay, "Shooting Niagara: And After?" was first published in *Macmillan's Magazine*, August, 1867.

[2] His description of our Civil War as a "smoky chimney which had taken fire" was widely familiar at the time.

want to make the best of it, and to prevent ill-feeling, Carlyle often seems regardless of others to a degree positively immoral. Helps,[1] who is a very tender-hearted man, and who aims at making people pleased with themselves and each other, complains, though he is Carlyle's warm friend, of his hard and reckless speech. Mr. Twisleton[2] speaks with aversion of Carlyle's ill-manners and wanton neglect of the feeling of other people. Carlyle, himself, is in this respect so far innocent, I believe, that he often is quite unconscious of the force of his words, and is led away by his habit of humorous exaggeration. Like all great talkers he says much for immediate effect, and forgets it as soon as said. . . . Emerson and Ruskin are the only distinguished living men of whom Carlyle spoke, — in all the talk I ever had with him, — with entire freedom from sarcasm or depreciation, with something like real tenderness.

Carlyle lives as you know at Chelsea — . . . not far from the river, whose banks at this point are picturesque and pleasant enough. His house is small, and altogether without pretensions to style or elegance, but it is comfortable, and his large study, which occupies the whole front of the second story, has a pleasant air and look. The wall on either side of the fireplace is occupied by the bookcases which hold his small library, and the other walls are hung with pictures and engravings, many of them relating to Cromwell and Frederick the Great, the chief among them being the picture of

[1] Arthur Helps, knighted a few years later.

[2] Hon. Edward T. B. Twisleton, whose wife was a cousin of Norton's.

Frederick and his sister the Margravine, as children, which was engraved for one of the volumes of the "Life of Friedrich."

Carlyle had asked me to come some afternoon, about three o'clock, to walk with him, and one day early in May I went at the appointed time. Very near his house I met young Mr. Cowper, (the brother of Lord Cowper,) a fellow of much more than ordinary capacity and sense, and very pleasant as a companion, and I proposed to him, knowing him to be a friend of Carlyle's, to go with me to see if the old man would like to walk with us. He agreed to do so, and we found Carlyle sitting in his study, in his dressing-gown, engaged on some work connected with the new edition of his Friedrich. He received us very cordially, and said he was all ready for his walk, if we would wait while he changed his dress. In a few minutes he appeared, — with the hat which is shown in one of the common photographs of him, and altogether presenting an appearance quite different from that of any other man in London. He was in excellent, cheerful humour, and soon turned on the full stream of his talk. I wish I could represent in written words the strong Scotch accent and peculiar intonation which add to the character of his speech. "Did ye ever happen to see," said he, "a warthy old book, called Collins's Peerage? I've been a somewhat diligent student o' that book meself, and yee'd find by looking at it that in arly times there was some meaning and vartue in the English nobility. But things ha' greatly changed, and nowadays they talk about making a peer out of a Jew,

with nothing to recommend him except his ill-gotten wealth. It's a sad fall. If things had n't gone altogether to the bad with us, there'd be some hanging done, and Dizzy be one of the first to suffer the penalty of his misdeeds. But the Jews have it all their own way, and Rothschild gets to be made a peer, when if there were any justice left in this poor distracted London, ye'd go to him and say, "Give up your wealth which you made by grindin' the faces of the poor, and by cheatin' transactions in old clothes,' and if he refused, ye'd just say, 'It's a mere matter o' dental precaution, ye can't have your wealth and your teeth too," and then ye'd draw one o' his grinders, and repeat the process till he let ye have his money-bags. But Astræa has flown and bade good-bye to us, and the Jews are uppermost in the land. Why, not many years ago I went down to a house in the country where Cromwell once lived, and where they still keep some o' the books which he read, and one Sunday mornin', before breakfast, I went to the top of a beautiful hill, and looking abroad I beheld shinin' and glitterin' in the distance what seemed to be a sort o' glorious palace all roofed over with sunlight. It was in the days whan Paxton[1] had been buildin' his great glass house, a kind o' Fools' Paradise, and mankind was singin' Hallelujah, and there was to be no more war, nor misery, nor poverty, and almost the reign o' Death was to come to an end, for men were to dwell like brethren in glass houses, — and when I asked at breakfast what gleaming mansion I had beheld from my hilltop, I was told

[1] Sir Joseph Paxton, designer of the Crystal Palace.

it was the abode, not of any heavenly-minded man, but of a Jew who had hired the great Paxton, to whom be praise! to erect a glass roof over his courtyard, for the wonder and admiration o' Jewish mankind. Whereupon I turned to the memory of Cromwell.

"I suppose there never was a man who had had so much to do with books as I have, who owned so few. I never have purchased a book which I could do without, or which I did not mean to read through. But in writing about Cromwell and Friedrich I have chanced to get together some things not wholly worthless nor yet easy to find, and I've thought I should like when I die to leave these books to some institution in New England, where they might be preserved, and where they would serve as a testimony of my appreciation o' the goodness o' your people toward me and o' the many acts o' kindness they have done me; and perhaps you can help me to have this rightly done." I, of course, replied as I best could, and added, "This pleases me the more, because I fancied that you thought we were going in my country in such a direction, and at such a rate that we should soon have no institutions left." "Ah," said he, "ye've verra much mistaken me. I think ye're doin' the wark for which Providence designed ye, peoplin' a great continent, — the finest part may be o' the warld, — with a better race o' Englishmen, to be forever a mighty nation, tho' ye're far from walkin' in the paths o' parfect wisdom. And, in truth, I don't think ye'll get into relation with the stars till ye erect some kind o' Kingship over ye, nor till ye mak the vote o' Jesus Christ o'

more weight and value than that o' Judas Iscariot. And farthermore ye'll be obliged to reduce your nagurs back into slavery, or else to kill them off by massacre or starvation, for the lazy bein's won't work without a master, and your people will soon get tired o' supportin' them. But, on the whole, spite o' all your wild freedom, and fourth o' July effervescences, I don't see but what your chance is as good as that o' any nation goin'. In fact ye seem to have got a kind o' king over you now. Your new President[1] has learned the vartue o' the silences, — which is a great way toward power. For the men who could speak wisely have been rare in all time, and almost the last o' them was Cromwell, and I know not where you'd find eloquence to compare with his when the full flood is on, and he pours forth exhortation and prophecy as one not doubtful that he is anointed o' the Lord. But we've no right to look for a king in these days. It'll be long yet ere one comes.

"I don't suppose a man was ever more weary of a task than I was o' my Friedrich. It was a good ten years' work, and from the beginning it was vexation o' the spirit, and weariness o' the flesh. It was good hard drudgery, — siftin' mostly a monstrous accumulation o' lies, — and o' all the nations the German lies with most scrupulosity and detail, — and tryin' to make a consistent character of Friedrich out o' a confused mass o' endless conflictin' detail, and not a book among them all with an index. Piles on piles o' rubbish to be dug into, and dug through, dirtyin' yer

[1] General Grant.

hands with the dust o' worms, and never findin' any helpfulness or assistance in the work which other men had done before ye. I sometimes thought I'd give it all up, but by dint o' regular work and exercise I at last got through with it. On careful calculation I found I had ridden not less than thirty thousan' miles during the campaigns o' Friedrich. I had a good horse, the most intelligent brute I ever knew, save a Scotch colly, — and I named him Fritz, and he and I learned to know every lane and by-road round London." — And then he went on to talk of his horses, of the dogs in his father's house, and to tell stories of them and other dogs, till our walk was ended. We had walked by Kensington Gardens, almost the whole way round Hyde Park.

What Carlyle said about America reminds me of the best saying of his which I have heard. Lord Russell told it to me with a full sense of its humour, for he himself is something of a humorist, and very pleasant in talk. "Why," said Carlyle, "the difference between the North and the South in relation to the nagur is just this, — the South says to the nagur, 'God bless you! and be a slave,' and the North says, 'God damn you! and be free.'" . . .

After making allowance for the extravagance, the wilfulness, and the recklessness of Carlyle, there remains a vast balance of what is strong, masculine, and tender in his nature. If one saw much of him, and accepted him sympathetically for what he is, one could hardly fail to become strongly attached to him. At bottom he is more mild than grim; and his humour is

closely allied with kindliness of heart and disposition. It has saved him from ruin by Calvinism and by flattery. His individuality is precious in these days of conformity and conventionalism, even in its excesses. I fancy he feels solitary, and among many admirers feels the lack of friends. But I have not seen him enough to speak confidently of him. . . .

Norton's allusion in the preceding letter to Carlyle's projects for leaving his Cromwell and Friedrich books to "some institution in New England" requires the addition of a few details. In response, evidently, to Carlyle's words, "perhaps you can help me to have this rightly done," Norton wrote Carlyle, May 24, 1869: "I believe that your wishes would be best carried out were you to leave the books you propose to give, to the Library of Harvard College, Cambridge, Massachusetts." On the back of the letter containing this suggestion Carlyle wrote, so illegibly that the quotation must be incomplete: "n. b. I do intend that *all* the *Friedrich* books . . . and likewise all the *Cromwell* ones . . . shall go as a BEQUEST in the way indicated by Norton here. Very cer^{n}. that to whoever comes after me! T. C."

A letter from Emerson to Norton in the winter of 1870 shows further how Norton's first intercourse with Carlyle relates itself to one of the treasures of the Harvard College Library. The letter suggests what it does not fully declare — that Carlyle's gift expressed in some measure his desire to make reparation for views publicly expressed during the War for the Union,

and later acknowledged by him to have been mistaken. Behind the little episode lay a vigour of feeling and intention highly characteristic of the sincerity and largeness of Carlyle's nature.

From R. W. Emerson

CONCORD, February 23, 1870.

MY DEAR NORTON, — I grudge you to Europe, and hope you are beginning to feel the cords drawing you to Cape Cod and Boston Light. We have been freshly desiring you lately, — had we needed any reminder, — by Henry James's letters which his father brought here, — and by Carlyle.

Pity and forgive. My part in that correspondence has been deplorable by delays; for his first letter reached me in the worst moment, when the printers were at my door, and I in my last retreats by reason of my rash promise of dates to Fields & Co. Then I had difficulties, hesitations in writing to Carlyle after three years' silence — so much had I from time to time thought to say to him yet had met his uniformly kindest overtures by brutish silence. These debates with the incessant printers lasted so long that . . . a second letter to me, arrived at my door with his wonder and charitable hypotheses about "my being on long journeys," etc., before I had yet begun my letter. Then I wrote him simply to the matter in hand, endorsing all your words. His first letter named no Institution, but only that he would give his books to America, and had been confirmed in this long-cherished purpose by your approbation and enforcement. You and I were to confer and

settle on the execution. I hesitated between Harvard College and the Boston Public Library and decided on Harvard, but waited to hear your verdict, and am heartily glad that you had already elected the same. I see no bar to the design, which is lovely and redeeming in Carlyle, and will make us all affectionate again. Your own letter to him I found perfect in its instructions, in its feeling and tone. I am now looking daily for a final letter from him on the matter, with his Catalogue, and shall then carry my report to President Eliot. Perhaps, however, I shall wait — it were better — for your final counsel in the matter, when you shall have received Carlyle's latest decisions. . . .

If you have not any more libraries or geniuses to conciliate for America, and have confirmed health in yourself and in your household I pray you to hasten home.

Yours affectionately,

R. W. Emerson.

Turning again to Norton's correspondence, the next letter, characteristically detailed, gives an impression of his intercourse, during the winter of 1869, with Morris and Burne-Jones, in whose work he already felt a deep interest.

To G. W. Curtis

Vevey, June 20, 1869.

. . . Twelve years ago I met one evening at Browning's (it was just after my dear old friend Mr. Kenyon's[1]

[1] Mrs. Browning's cousin, John Kenyon, died in 1856.

death, and the Brownings were living in his house, in London,) two young fellows lately from Oxford named Morris and Jones. Jones was very shy and quiet, and seemed half overpowered by the warmth of eulogy which Browning bestowed on a drawing that Jones had brought to show him, — a drawing in the extreme Pre-Raphaelite manner, exquisitely over-elaborated, a work of infinite detail, quaint, but full of real feeling and rare fancy.

Both Browning and his wife were very much struck with it, and I recall the effort Mrs. Browning made to set the young artist at his ease, and to express her pleasure in his work in such a way as to please him. From time to time since then I have heard from Ruskin of Burne-Jones, and knew that Ruskin thought very highly of his work. I knew too that he had been getting some repute with the public at large.

Last autumn, one Sunday when I was staying with Ruskin, he proposed that we should drive into town in the afternoon, and get "Ned," as he is familiarly called, and bring him back for dinner. We found him alone at home, and ready to accompany us back to Denmark Hill. It so chanced that he and I had a great deal of talk that afternoon and evening. We met not as strangers and we parted as old friends, — and I promised him that I would spend a day or two with him in the course of a few weeks. So not long after I went from Keston one Sunday and reached his house early in the afternoon. He lives quite on the outskirts of London, in Fulham, in a pleasant house of the last century, in which Richardson lived for many years,

and which has not been materially changed since his time.[1] It stands a little back from the street and has a large garden at its side and behind it, of an old-fashioned sort and with some old trees standing in it. Within, — a pleasanter, simpler, sweeter home is not to be found in London, nor one which in its freedom from meaningless conventionality and in its entire naturalness is more in contrast to the prevailing style of London homes. The household consists of Jones and his wife and their two children, Phil,[2] a fine boy of seven, and Margaret,[3] a superb beauty of three. Ned Jones himself is a man who is striking at first glance from the openness and sincerity of his look and manner. He is about thirty-five, — with a broad open face, with light hair, and a long, light, full, soft beard. There is something so gentle in his manner, so feminine in the sympathetic character of his expression that persons on first acquaintance are hardly likely to do justice to the real force of character which underlies his softer qualities. He has a nervous temperament, and a vivid restless fancy — but these are combined with solid sense, and with a thoughtfulness and culture which one rarely expects to find in a modern artist. He is a strong, almost a bitter, Republican; and the condition of society in England is to him a scandal and a reproach. He is a genuine democrat, of a democracy that will endure. His nature is truly a lovely one, — "sweetness and light" are the stuff of it, and his genius is of such an order that he is one of the most

[1] Sir Edward Burne-Jones occupied this house till his death in 1898.
[2] Sir Philip Burne-Jones, Bart. [3] Now Mrs. J. W. Mackail.

original and creative painters of our time, one of the very few who paint pictures of intrinsic worth, and of such a quality that posterity may perhaps care to look at them.

His wife is, however, the best part of himself, — in her look a Stothard Grace strayed from the pages of Milton's "Allegro" or Rogers's "Italy" into real life, — as slight and small a lady as Stothard ever drew, and yet with a latent depth and strength of character that would suffice to inspire one of Titian's women. There is always a quaint, pretty idyllic look about her as she enters the room, for her dress corresponds with her face and figure in its piquant and not extravagant originality. As you come to know her better and better, you find more and more that wins not only affection but respect. People who have done more for themselves than these two, in securing a due and desirable freedom of mind and soul, and in maintaining a genuine independence of life in the midst of the community which Mill complains of as that in which "social discipline has most succeeded not so much in conquering, as in suppressing, whatever is liable to conflict with it," — I have never seen. They live much in a little circle of intimates of their own, and very little in any other. The inmost circle of all consists of Morris and his wife, Gabriel Rossetti, and a friend named Webb.[1] Once a week the Morrises dine with the Burne-Joneses, or vice-versa, on Wednesdays, and they are with each other, though living four miles

[1] Philip Webb, architect, associated with the firm of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co., art decorators.

apart, at least two or three times in the intervening days. There is much that is similar in the geniuses of the two men, — and their constant, most affectionate and sympathetic relations inevitably make the influence of each strong over the other.

They have had a somewhat similar course of development, — at Oxford first together for two or three years, then taking up art together, both greatly affected by the theories and practice of Pre-Raphaelitism, both plunging into the hardest work and ultra mediævalism, both gradually working their way out from the morbidness, factitiousness and narrowness of the early period of the School, while retaining its serious purpose, strong feeling, and faith in Art as the minister and interpreter of nature. Morris's first volume of poetry is the extremest expression of Pre-Raphaelitism, in its most characteristic forms in literature, and Burne-Jones's early drawings and pictures correspond with the "Legend of Queen Guenevere"[1] in elaborate and quaint unreality, not less than in vigour of conception, and sincerity of its expression to the mood of the artist. The two men have gone together along the same paths and have grown nearer to each other all the time. With curiously differing temperaments they are curiously similar in certain spiritual and artistic gifts, and one is as a poet much what the other is as a painter. Not that I mean to represent Burne-Jones's genius as having as wide a scope, or as vigorous a power as Morris's, but within its range it corresponds with his to a remarkable degree, and Jones is such a

[1] "The Defence of Guenevere," published in 1858.

painter as Morris might be were he not poet, and were his health delicate instead of robust. "The Earthly Paradise" is not more widely different from the "Legend of Queen Guenevere" than Burne-Jones's later pictures are from his earlier, — and yet in both instances the spiritual relationship is strong between the earlier and later work. One can trace the progress of the men from a narrow and exclusive field of art into the broad ranges of its complete domain which embraces Gothic and Greek, mediæval and classic ideals, and excludes no source of beauty or delight.

Burne-Jones's studio is a large room on the garden side of the house. There is a pleasant look of work about it, and a general air of appropriate disorder. All round the wall, upon the floor, and on easels, lie and stand sketches or pictures in every stage of existence. Jones's lively imagination is continually designing more than he can execute. His fancy creates a hundred pictures for one that his hand can paint. It keeps him awake night after night with its animated suggestions, and each morning he covers the canvas with the outline of a new picture, or draws an illustration in pencil for the "Earthly Paradise."

There are literally hundreds of these and other such drawings, all full of exquisite feeling and grace, all picturesquely and poetically conceived.

There are three or four enormous volumes filled with studies of every sort, — many of them worthy to go with the famous studies of the great masters.

He exhibits but little publicly; there is nothing of his at the Royal Academy; but at the Exhibition of

the Old Water Colour Society this spring, a picture of his has held the place of honour, and has attracted great attention from the public as well as the critics. Opinion has been very divided upon it. It is too original and poetic in conception and treatment to secure commonplace liking. It represents Circe, preparing for the arrival of the Argonauts. In the distance the sails of the fleet are seen stretching toward the enchanted island over a dull grey sea. The foreground is occupied by an open hall of Circe's palace, rich with marble and gold, in which she stands, a fair but malign woman leaning forward pouring dark drops of poison into a jar of wine. At her feet crouch two glossy black panthers, the former victims of her arts. A sunflower blowing by the wall catches up and concentrates in its intense yellow and black the prevailing colours and tones of the scene. The colour is as completely a part of the conception as the rhythm of one of Shelley's poems. . . . A picture of another sort was on his easel when we left London, — in which Venus is seen standing with a band of beautiful maidens around her on the brink of a clear, still, blue mountain pool, in the midst of an exquisite landscape, teaching to them the charm of this primitive mirror. Morris ought to describe these pictures, not I, — and especially, The Fates and the Lovers, where the Fates sit in a solemn temple, by which two lovers are passing hand in hand, unconscious that it is the thread of their destiny that Clotho is at the moment spinning and Atropos about to sever. In imaginative fulness and suggestiveness of detail these pictures surpass all other modern work

but Rossetti's, — yet the detail is never intrusive, but always subordinated to the general effect. . . .

There is more genius in these two men's work than in the whole twelve hundred pictures of the Royal Academy, and ten times twelve hundred more of the same sort. Indeed in contrast with the low prevailing standard of English art, its frivolous efforts, its devotion to secondary ends, its purely commercial spirit, and its entire want of noble purpose, motive and faith, — such work as these two men do seems to belong to another period, and is in truth executed by men of wholly different temper of mind and different principles of life from those of the mass of contemporary artists.

All winter we have seen much of the Burne-Joneses, and have all grown strongly attached to them. They and Morris (Mrs. Morris being generally too delicate to be of the party) have dined often with us, and we have dined with them, always in the most friendly and social way, almost as often. Mrs. Jones has a pleasant voice, pleasantly cultivated, — and her music is of a rare sort, and not of the modern but of the former better English school. She will sing for an hour delightfully from Haydn, from Cherubini, from Bach, or will turn from these composers to the lighter style of the old Shakespearian and Ben Jonson songs, or the still older English airs and French chansons. At the piano she sings as one of Stothard's beauties ought to. They are among the friends who have given its pleasantest character to our long stay in London, and from whom we are most sorry to part. . . .

To John Ruskin

VEVEY, July 17, 1869.

MY DEAREST RUSKIN, — It gives me truest pleasure to get such a note as your last with good accounts of yourself and your work. "The churches are cool," — how that phrase carried me into the frankincensed, cool atmosphere of S. Anastasia and S. Fermo, — into the pictured chapels of Venice! Switzerland is not Italy, and Italy is the country where the American, exile in his own land from the past record of his race, finds most of the most delightful part of that record.

Why do I call Byron "insincere"? Because he seems to me a rhetorician more than a poet by nature; a man accustomed to make a display of his feelings, and dependent for his satisfaction on the effect produced on other people by the display. He had in some measure the temperament of a tenor singer on the stage. He must be *en évidence* continually; — and all these things corrupt sincerity, and make a man, unconsciously often, consciously sometimes, insincere. I do not see evidence, in his descriptions of nature or of works of art, of the sincere vision of the poet, and in his passionate declamations concerning himself, his woes, his sleeplessness, etc., I often fancy that I catch the tone of falseness, at any rate, the ring of thin metal. I admire your phrase "his incontinence of emotion"; but this like all other incontinence soon leads to a loss of purity in the emotion, and drives the unhappy being to stimulants of a very fatal sort.

Extreme self-consciousness and sincerity in a poet

of undisciplined character seem to be almost incompatible; self-consciousness is apt to be accompanied with more or less affectation, — as often in Wordsworth; Scott is unconscious, unaffected and sincere.

All which is humbly submitted to your Honour. . . .

It grieved me to hear of the destruction of Theodoric's castle, — but the Italians have never cared for his memory as they should have done, — for was he not a Goth and are they not descendants of the Romans? It is curious how the Germans kept his name and fame in their legendary poetry. What a striking figure he is in the Nibelungenlied.

It is late. I must say Good-night, — but one word, (which I had almost forgotten) about Mr. Dixon's "New America,"[1] — it is a book not to be trusted, wholly unfair in many of its delineations . . . of the country and the people. The only lately published book about America which, so far as I know, is worth reading, is one by a Rev. Mr. Zincke,[2] published by Murray a few months ago. It is the book of a good observer, a gentleman, and a man accustomed to reflection.

With faithful love,

Ever yours,

C. E. N.

To G. W. Curtis

VEVEY, July 22, 1869.

Your letter of the 4th, to Jane, came this morning, and was heartily welcome. It seemed as if you had

[1] William Hepworth Dixon's *New America* was published in 1867.

[2] F. B. Zincke (1817–1893), one of Queen Victoria's chaplains, author of various books of travel.

come in to join us at an Ashfield breakfast on the morning after your arrival from New York, but had had only ten minutes to stay. I want very much to hear more about the editorship of the "Times." With all my heart I wish that the matter may be so arranged that you will take the place. You and I, no doubt, feel alike as to the importance of the position, and agree that its importance makes it imperative on you to accept it, if certain indispensable conditions are fulfilled. It would not be worth while for you to take the place unless in some way absolute editorial independence is secured to you; — that you should have entire editorial control of the paper, free from any interference or supervision whatever, is essential. Then (but this I cannot help regarding, as I believe you also would regard it, as of minor importance) you ought to have secured to you such a share in the property of the paper as should give you a fair proportion of the profits arising from your management of it. With these two conditions fulfilled I think there is no post in the public service which I would rather see you in, and none in which you would be able to exert a more direct and widespread influence. It was but last week that in a letter to John Morley something led me to speak of the editorship of a leading journal as one of the very few places which a man of great powers, and high, self-sacrificing aims might desire to occupy. In our country, in New York, at this time, the good that a man of your principles, character, talents and taste might effect as editor of the "Times" is so great that it will always remain to me a serious disappointment and

regret for the country's sake if the offer of the place should not ultimately take such shape that you can accept it. I trust you will soon find time to write me a satisfactory long letter about this and other personal and public matters. To be sure I get a good deal of you every week in "Harper," — but not that part of you which is your special reserve for me. . . .

The aspect of public affairs as seen from here is not altogether pleasing. Grant's surrender, partial though it may be, to the politicians was an unexpected disappointment, but a very instructive one. His other mistakes were what might have been expected, — what indeed we ought to have been prepared for. But some of his appointments are disgraceful, — personally discreditable to him. The "Nation" of the 8th (which also came this morning) has a vigorous Godkinian article on Sickles [1] which rejoices my spirit. As Hosea Biglow says of old Buckinum, — "by Time, ses he, I *du* like a feller that ain't a Feared." The question seems to be now whether the politicians, — "the men inside politics," — will ruin the country, or the country take summary vengeance, by means of Jenckes's bill,[2] upon them.

But I will leave America to you, and go back once more to England, though I am beginning to feel that it is time to put an end to these long letters. If I had not written so much at length during the winter about the

[1] General D. E. Sickles was appointed in 1869 United States Minister to Spain.

[2] The bill introduced by Thomas A. Jenckes, of Rhode Island, but not adopted, which would have established civil service reform earlier than it came.

most interesting persons whom I saw that it does not seem worth while to write more about them even to you, I should be more sure of entertaining you. To describe the character of my London winter with Carlyle, Mill, and, more than all, Ruskin, left out, is like looking at the stars with the Great Bear, the North Star, and Sirius omitted. Ruskin indeed made our life both at Keston and in London very different from what it would have been without his constant kindness. His pleasure in pleasing others by lavish liberality of all sorts is one of the sweet feminine traits of his nature. When we were first at Keston he sent us a quantity of beautiful water-colours — William Hunt's, his own, and Turner's work — to hang on our walls, and as long as we stayed in England he supplied us with all the drawings of this sort we desired. His own work is — as the illustrations to "Modern Painters" partially show, — in some artistic qualities quite unequalled by that of any living English draughtsman. His genius is quite as plainly shown in his drawing as in his writing, — and the extravagances of his temper and temperament are less obvious in it. Indeed hard work at drawing is the most soothing and steadying occupation for his restless and disturbed spirit. His delicacy of hand, his exquisite refinement and penetration of sight and of touch, his sensitiveness to colour and form, his poetic feeling, are all indicated, if not fully expressed, in his drawing, and so far expressed whether he is drawing the rosy convolutions of a shell, or the grey buttresses of an old church, or the purple depths of the morning glory, or the gold clouds of the sunrise, or

the distant white summits of the Alps, or is copying Luini's Sta. Barbara, or one of the Venetian ladies of Paul Veronese, — his gifts and genius are, I say, so far expressed as to give to it quite a special and peculiar value and charm, and to make a collection of them a most striking exhibition of the breadth and variety as well as the exquisiteness of his powers.

His pleasant house at Denmark Hill, — one of those large, comfortable, retired suburban houses characteristic of the neighbourhood of London, — is a perfect treasury of art. Besides the Turners and the Tintorets, and the Sir Joshua, and the magnificent Titian (superb head, in his best style, of the Doge Andrea Gritti) which hang on the walls of drawing-room, and parlour, and dining-room, — his upstairs study contains several of the finest of Turner's drawings on the walls, and multitudes of his and of Ruskin's own drawings are arranged in cupboards and drawers of writing table and bookcases, and others still simply in piles because there is no room for any other arrangement of them. Upstairs still again, in the upper story of the house, is another little work-room, — but this is not for art, but for the minerals which Ruskin delights himself with studying. Over the collection, to be sure, his taste presides with supreme absolutism. It is a collection of jewels and precious stones rather than of common every-day cabinet specimens. His agates, which have been lately been his special study, are beautiful and perfect as agates can be. His crystals of all sorts are each of their kind as good as the agates, — and are arranged, as their beauty deserves, in velvet-

lined cases, each drawer in the cases being lined with a different coloured velvet to suit the various colours of the brilliant transparent stones. Here are the "Ethics of the Dust."

Everything in and about the house indicates large expense, and a double control of it. For old Mrs. Ruskin still controls the household, and though confined to her bedroom and almost bedridden, directs with somewhat despotic sway the order of the house. A Scotch cousin, a pretty, lively, sweet-tempered girl of twenty-four or five, Joan Agnew,[1] is the vizier or prime minister, and the housekeeping is such as the excellence of old-fashioned English servants allows. It is one of Ruskin's firmest principles that we ought to make our dependents happy, and a more contented and attached set of servants could hardly be found than his. The work of the house is done, contrary to the usual English fashion, by maids; there is no butler, no footman, — and the maids are ideally tidy, well-mannered and pretty. There is one old woman who has lived with the family ever since Ruskin was born, — she too is an ideal old nurse, and there is a pattern middle-aged housekeeper. The furnishing of the house has undergone little change in forty years or so, — and is of the solid-mahogany English style. The guest chamber has its great four-poster with yellow silk curtains, and its great wardrobe, and in this chamber you feel yourself in the characteristic English room, — or would feel so if of late years Ruskin had not invaded it, hung beau-

[1] Now Mrs. Arthur Severn, daughter-in-law of Keats's friend, Joseph Severn.

tiful drawings, by Burne Jones and Rossetti, on its walls, and taken possession of half of the wardrobe for portfolios of drawings and for piles of drawings mounted and framed. Immediately before the front door stands an old cedar of Lebanon, a tree which Ruskin will not hear praised, owing to its not being a fine specimen for its years. Behind the house is a half lawn, half meadow, (with flower-beds close under the windows,) across which you look out over a wide stretch of country, only encroached upon here and there in the distance by the outposts of the advancing city. At one side is the garden, the greenhouse, the grapery, the fruit walls and all the pleasant appurtenances of such a home.

Suppose you and I were to go out there some pleasant morning together. We should walk slowly up the shady Denmark Hill, and coming along by a high black fence on the left, should ring the bell at the avenue gate, which would be opened for us by David the coachman, or his wife, or one of their numerous children, who would greet us cordially, and from whom we should learn that Ruskin was at home. Going up the avenue we should hear a bell rung to announce our approach, and before we reached the front door it would be opened to us, and we should hear that Mr. Ruskin was very busy, and desired not to be disturbed unless we came, which I had told him we might very likely do on one of these days. We go through the hall, through a little room or passage at the right filled with flowers in beautiful bloom, and should stop to look at the touching portrait by Turner of himself as a youth,

through which in his old age he had thrust a knife, — and we should then pass into the middle parlour hung round with ten or twelve of Turner's finest drawings, and with two or three of William Hunt's over the fireplace. A long window at the southern end of the room looks out over the flower-beds and the lawn. We should hardly have time to get even a general view of all this, before we should hear Ruskin's quick light step through the hall, and he would come in with the most warmly welcoming smile, both hands outstretched, and most cordial words of pleasure at our coming.

You would be struck at once with the sweetness and refinement of his look, with a certain touch of quaintness in his dress and manner which gives a pleasant flavour to his originality, with the peculiar and sorrowful tenderness of expression in his eyes, with the mobility of his mouth, and with the fine, nervous, overstrung organization betrayed alike in gait, in carriage, in manner, in expression, in shape, and in words. At first, for five minutes perhaps, he would show in your presence as a stranger, a little shyness and constraint, apparent in a want of entire simplicity of manner. But this would wear off quickly and in a quarter of an hour you and he would be on easy terms, and talking as if you had known each other for years. He would want you to see this and that other drawing, would be pleased that you liked his favourite the best, would point out the merits of each as he alone can do it, would tell you why he did not like this one, would bring out the drawings which he bought this spring at Mr. Dillon's sale, — one for which he gave £1200, — another,

a most exquisite drawing of the Bay of Naples which cost him 800 guineas, — and which Turner originally got 30 for, — and so on till lunch time, when he would insist on your staying, and we should go into the dining-room to find there Miss Agnew, and some one of the pretty bevy of young girls who come one after another to stay at the house, and perhaps the quiet Mr. Burgess [1] who is doing some woodcutting under Ruskin's direction. With the two lively young ladies we should have a merry lunch, and Ruskin would be as good a listener to your stories and as good a laugher as any of them. But before lunch was done that expression of fatigue would come into his eye which one observes in the most delicately organized persons, showing that his nervous strength was giving out, — and though he would beg us to stay, we should come away.

You would see him again some other time, and have a long, serious talk with him, and then you would tell me you had never seen so sad a man, never one whose nature seemed to have been so sensitized to pain by the experience of life. It is only a few weeks since that he wrote me from Verona, where he has been for the last two months, drawing the monuments of the Scaligeri, — "You must remember it is impossible for you at all to conceive the state of mind of a person who has undergone as much pain as I have." And the source of this pain, like that of all deepest human suffering, is so complex, and some of its elements lie so deep among

[1] Arthur Burgess, a pupil whose untimely death Ruskin lamented in a memoir, 1887.

the roots of character, that to analyse it would be not only to tell the story of his life but to describe his whole individuality of nature. In the result of his life, in the actual John Ruskin of to-day, it is hard to tell whether nature or circumstance has worked well or happily for him from his birth; even what seemed like happiness has often been only the covering of evil for him. Born with a nature of peculiar sweetness, of feminine sweetness, tenderness, impressibility, and generosity, and with genius that showed itself in his childish years, — an only child of a domineering woman to whose strong nature Scotch Calvinism was well suited, tenderly loved by her, and petted, ruled, disciplined and spoiled by her, and loved and petted as well by his father, never well understood by either, — with his moral sense early and morbidly over-developed, his poetic sensibility turned into a false direction by false religious notions, — his self-will, and his vanity encouraged as he grew up by the devotion and flattery of father and mother and friends, — with no experience of the world, — he began his independent life as little prepared for its various trials and discipline as a man could well be. "Never," said he once to me, "did fond good parents meaning to do right do worse by a child than mine did by me." [1] For years after most men are forced to match themselves with the real world, he was living in a world of his own, — and losing the chance of gaining that acquaintance with practical life, that

[1] It should be remembered in reading this passage that Ruskin's own words about his early training and the influence of his parents bear out what the friends who knew him intimately could not but recognize. See, *e.g.*, his letter to Mrs. John Simon, in E. T. Cook's *Life of John Ruskin*, II, 168.

self-control, and that development of reason which he more than most men required. So fancy and wilfulness, controlled by his genius, and by his religious creed, and by the loveliness of his disposition, and by the love of beauty, guided him from vagary to vagary, — each in turn ending in pain. One can read much of his moral history in his books. It is best written there, the special events need not be written down, and I trust never will be. But later circumstance, — fate shall I call it? or result of character? — has been against him as much as earlier. Nothing has turned out for him as he most desired, — everything has tended to make him more and more sensitive and self-willed and passionate and unreasonable, and self-confident, — and the result is that he hurts himself against life and the world, and is at the same time the most tender, humble, kind, generous and loving soul that this earth holds. You see what a mass of unhappy contradictions he is, — Don Quixotte in his wildest moods was not so wild or so chivalric as he; he compared himself one day to Rousseau, and said that great parts of "Les Confessions" were so true to himself that he felt as if Rousseau must have transmigrated into his body; — but Don Quixotte in his noblest aspect is the comparison that pleases me best, and poor Ruskin is often morally as ill-treated by the world, and made at heart as black and blue as the brave, irrational, generous, lofty-hearted old knight was in body by his ungenerous opponents. He wrote me the other day, "If I were to die now, the life would have been such a wreck that you could n't even make anything of the drift-wood."

I had a note from Longfellow yesterday in which he tells me of meeting Ruskin in Verona, (last autumn when I was with Ruskin in Paris we had a delightful little *partie carrée*, — he and Longfellow and Tom Appleton and I, — they had never met before). Ruskin had written me two or three weeks ago of their meeting at Verona. Longfellow's few words express with exquisite felicity the impression that Ruskin would make on one of keen and delicately sympathetic insight, and express at the same time the prevailing temper of his mind. "At Verona," he says, "we passed a delightful day with Ruskin. I shall never forget a glimpse I had of him mounted on a ladder, copying some details of the tomb of Can Grande. He was very pleasant in every way, but, I thought, very sad; suffering too keenly from what is inevitable and beyond remedy, and making to himself

> "A second nature, to exist in pain
> As in his own allotted element."

"Everything," wrote Ruskin in one of his letters from Verona just before this meeting, "is a dreadful problem to me now, — of living things, from the lizards and everything less and worse than they, (including those Americans I met the other day), up to Can Grande; — and of dead, *everything* that *is* dead irrecoverably; — how much!" . . .

Of course Ruskin's unreasonableness and moodiness make friendships with him difficult, but his tenderness, his generosity, his kindness, his genuine humility make it, one would believe, easy for any man with a little sympathy and considerateness to be his friend.

He suffers from his solitariness; and in thinking of him I am often reminded of the pages in the last volume of "Modern Painters" in which he speaks of the treatment Turner received from the public, of his loneliness, and of its evil effect upon his work and character. It may well have been that this passage was written out of the depths of his own experience. The breaking off of his friendly relations with Carlyle was a great sorrow to him. You remember the circumstances. He indiscreetly repeated in a published letter some extravagances of Carlyle about the treatment he was apt to meet with from the street boys. Carlyle was vexed, and published in the "Times" a very brief and hard denial of having made the statement that Ruskin had imputed to him. It was a direct issue, and there is not the least question that Carlyle was wrong. He *did* say, so I heard from a person who was present when he said it, what Ruskin reported; but he said it in one of his wild moods of half-cynical, half-humorous exaggeration, very likely forgot his words as soon as uttered, and at least had no intention that they should be taken *au pied de la lettre*, or that he should be held responsible for them. Although the breaking of their intimacy is a great loss in some respects to Ruskin, it is not wholly to be regretted, for his unreasonableness and extravagance were cherished and confirmed by the still more unreasonable and extravagant Carlyle;— Carlyle embittered him, kept up a raw on his nerves, and poor Ruskin had not the safeguard against him that Carlyle possesses against his own *ill humours* in his healthy and exuberant humour. Not that he has

not a pleasant and lively humour, but not one of force to be a strong element of vitality and sanity.

I wish you could see Ruskin as I see him in a memory that comes back to me at this minute, — in his pleasant, cheerful drawing-room, one winter evening, with a bright fire in the grate, — he kneeling by a chair on which and by which are a number of framed drawings that he has brought downstairs to show Susan and Grace and Sara,[1] some pieces of Turner's work which were specially characteristic and on which he set great value, full of eagerness and animation, with a candle in one hand, with the other pointing to the drawing, talking with perfect freshness, and simplicity and natural eloquence, while his three listeners joined by two other pretty young auditors stood around him in a lively picturesque group. Nobody could be more delightful than he, at such a time, as host in his own house. Or I wish you could see him as he sat one evening in our drawing-room talking very quietly with my Mother, while Miss Agnew and little Connie Hilliard[2] were singing at the piano at the other end of the room, and not suiting him in the rendering of a lively Negro melody he corrected them, when suddenly Miss Joan ran across the room, seized him by both hands, dragged him after her and compelled him to join them, which he did with excellent grace, in singing the vivacious melody of "Ten little Niggers going out to dine,"

[1] Mrs. C. E. Norton, Miss Grace Norton, and Mrs. Norton's sister, Miss Sara Sedgwick, afterward Mrs. W. E. Darwin.

[2] Miss Constance Hilliard (Mrs. W. H. Churchill), a niece of Ruskin's friend, Lady Trevelyan; much in these years with Miss Agnew, and often with the Nortons.

— one of the most popular London songs this last winter. . . .

In thinking over what I have written, I doubt if I have given an adequate impression of the extreme susceptibility and impressibleness of his nature, and of his engrossment with the object before him. You see these qualities in his every-day life and feelings, as you see them in his books. They are parts of his genius. I one day said to him, "If you see a sunset you forget that you saw a sunrise this morning, and indeed rather disbelieve in the existence of sunrises altogether. But to-morrow morning if the sunrise is beautiful you will think nothing of the sunset." He good-naturedly assented, and went on to speak of the effect of this disposition of his on his writings.

And now after all I have written I feel how much more I ought to write would I give you a true picture of a character so complex, and a life so full of traits of strong individuality. But is a character ever justly and adequately described? Happily your sympathetic imagination can fill up what is needed, and better in Ruskin's case even than in most others, — for what in his case is chiefly required is sympathy and imagination. — Moreover, I am tired of writing, to-night, as you see by the looks of this page. . . .

To John Ruskin

VEVEY, October 8, 1869.

. . . One more letter to you from here, from this most beautiful part of Switzerland, which, though you have not been here with us, is yet dear to me from its

associations with you. How strange, — our meeting on the boat that lovely summer morning (lovely though rainy, so that you were reading from Madame de Staël — or was it Madame de Genlis? — in the cabin to your Mother) the beginning of that long voyage on which we then embarked together unknowingly! How strange, how fortunate that unconscious sympathy that brought us together that day, to ripen into the conscious sympathy which now makes up so large a part of the interests of my life at least! The talk of thirteen years ago resulting in the letters and talks of this year! . . .

Though the following letter has a limited range of interest, it illustrates so effectively one of Norton's characteristics that it may take its place among letters of wider scope. This was a love of perfection in the detail and methods underlying every art, which gave to his interest in some of the applied arts — printing in especial — almost the craftsman's own enjoyment and understanding.

To John Ruskin

GENEVA, October 12, 1869.

. . . Some two or three weeks ago I saw some books that have been printed during the last ten or fifteen years by a Geneva printer named Fick. Paper and presswork, ink and typography, all seemed to me of rare excellence, and I resolved, if I had opportunity, to visit M. Fick and get some of his paper that you might, if you liked it as well as I, show it to your publishers,

and put them up to getting something as good for the new volumes of your works.

To-day I have seen M. Fick, and I send to you two little tracts which show his practise of his art, and a leaf from a third, that you may have several specimens alike of the paper he uses and of his type. The business is carried on by a father and son. I saw the old man, and had a long and pleasant talk with him. He is the inheritor of a very old business, — that established in the sixteenth century at Lyons and Geneva by the famous printer Jean de Tournes. He still possesses the dies for the type used by the old printer, and you will see in the tracts I have sent to you what beautiful dies they are, and what good use the modern printer makes of them. He has also a quantity of the wood blocks used for cuts in the Bibles and other books printed by de Tournes, and by Robert Estienne, (Stephanus, — the great printer who took refuge in Geneva,) and has lately printed off a few copies of them on folio sheets. I should send you a set if they seemed to be of as much worth as they are of curiosity. M. Fick seems to have more of the feeling and pride of an artist than one commonly finds in the directors of printing offices. He tells me that his best paper is made for him by M. Thurneisen of Bâle; that it costs less than English paper of the same weight, and is made of much better material; he thinks there is no doubt of its lasting much longer than the English paper. To my mind the Bâle paper, such as that on which the little books I send you are printed, is far pleasanter to read from than the highly-calendered, bad-for-writing, fashionable English paper.

Most of M. Fick's books are costly, — for he usually prints but few copies of them. When he prints a considerable number, the books do not cost so much as common English books of the same size. Calvin's "Traité des Reliques" for instance, a volume of about the size of "The Queen of the Air," and exquisitely printed on paper very nearly like that used for the little Tractate of Bernard Pallissy, is sold, done up in paper covers, for six francs. This is such cheapness as I want. Good work paid for at fair price.

Perhaps you may not care for all these details, but I can not but think that Mr. Burgess's wood cuts would print off much more exquisitely on this Bâle paper than on such as Mr. Smith protested was the best he could get in England.

They are digging up the pavement of the central part of the nave of the Cathedral here, and have made a big hole in which they are about to put a *calorifère*. I could not see the remains of the crypt, — but in digging the workmen had turned up a lot of bones which were thrown pell-mell in a heap at the foot of one of the piers of the nave.

"Are those the bones of Protestants?" I asked. — "Ah non, Monsieur," was the answer, "certainement non, mais des Romanistes." It was a touching sight. I hate Calvinism and its works. What an ugly place, — morally and materially, — Geneva is, and what a beautiful place it ought to be!

Good-night. With faithful love,

Ever Yours,

C. E. N.

From Switzerland the Nortons proceeded to Italy in the autumn of 1869. In Florence first, and then in Siena, establishing themselves in villas, which they took for some months at a time, and later in Venice and Rome, they passed two delightful years. The letters of this period show, perhaps more than any others, the student of art and of life possessing himself of that which for more than thirty years after his return to America he gave to the successive college generations at Harvard. George Eliot, writing to Mrs. Norton, December 12, 1869, seemed to divine one element of Norton's contribution to American life: "I imagine Mr. Norton is brooding over some work that he will give us all by and by. Not that men need write if they have influence in other ways. I think the lastingness of results from a social position adequately filled, is grievously underestimated; and the very abundance of print serves to be continuously reducing its efficacy compared with the fine rarities of speech and action." Of these "fine rarities," side by side with the fruits of study, Norton was constantly making himself a master.

To Chauncey Wright

FLORENCE, December 5, 1869.

. . . If you could come in, as I have fancied and as I wish, our talk would be of familiar things, not of Florentine pictures and antiquities, not of the heroes of Boccaccio's stories, — but of horse cars and boarding houses, and of all the immortal incidents of the last week in Cambridge. Jane and Grace would, indeed,

arrange with you for a long walk to-morrow to Fiesole, passing by the villa that Michel Angelo built for Landor to live in! — or if that, they thought, were too far they would propose to show you the way to Lorenzo the Magnificent's favourite villa of Cariggi, which lies a mile to the north of our house. I don't know who designed this villa in which we are living,—but, whoever he was, he had a share in that love of variety and picturesqueness which is the common heritage of Italian builders, and gives to the poorest house in the dullest town or village a delightful individuality and expression of personal character. In this is one of the great charms of Italian towns,—no two houses are alike, each has its own look and character; there are no streets built by contract with houses cut to measure on one pattern; but the streets look as streets ought to look, as if they had grown into shape and form out of the various will and taste of the men and women who first built and then occupied their houses. The entertainment, the pleasantness, the charm as of a varied natural scene, which this variety of expression gives to a town are hardly to be overstated. You can study national traits in doors and windows and balconies, — national traits in individual instances,—you can read history in battlements and chimney-pots, or romance in arcades and terraces. There used to be even more of this expressiveness and historic interest in the great Italian towns than there is now, — for the prosperity, so-called, of the last few years has developed the commercial and trading taste, — the taste of New York and Paris, — the taste for what is fashionable and fresh and showy, — so that

many old walls have been torn down and whitewashed, many precious bits of art or character sacrificed, that the new generation may have the satisfaction of displaying its new wealth in the style which emulates that of Chicago or St. Louis. Italy in losing tyrants, in becoming constitutional, in taking to trade, is doing what she can to spoil her charm. The railroad whistle just behind the church of Santa Maria Novella, or just beyond the Campo Santo at Pisa, sounds precisely as it sounds on the Back Bay or at the Fitchburg Station, — and it and the common school are Americanizing the land to a surprising degree. Happy country! Fortunate people! Before long they may hope for their Greeleys, their Beechers, and their Fisks.[1]

The effort Italy is making to adapt herself to Constitutional forms of government is highly creditable, — for the panacea does not suit her temperament or her conditions. An ignorant people, an unintelligent and dissolute king, an upper class unaccustomed to administration, public men unused to debate, would anywhere make the success of a constitutional experiment doubtful, — but here where the temperament of the nation is passionate rather than rational, where neither civic virtues nor political discipline have existed for centuries, where, indeed, the idea of Italy as a commonwealth has to be created, there will be nothing strange if the experiment should fail. Constitutional monarchy may lead to a constitutional republic, that to an unconstitutional Despotism.

[1] The career of James Fisk, Jr., is vividly summarized in Rhodes's *United States*, Vol. vi, chap. 36.

The future is very dark in Europe, and to me it looks as if we were entering on a period quite new in history, — one in which the questions on which parties will divide, and from which outbreak after outbreak of passion and violence will arise, will no longer be political but immediately social. Everywhere in the lower classes, — that is, in the labouring classes and those below them, — not merely a spirit of discontent exists, but a more or less distinctly formulated opposition to existing social institutions and arrangements. In Italy, just as in Switzerland, Germany, France, and England, there is complaint about division of property, talk of rights of labour, of rates of wages, and other such matters, no longer in the calm style of professorial political economy, but in the heated discussions of conventions of workingmen, and committees of trade societies. Much of the talk is helpless enough, — vague, wild, and ignorant to the last degree, — but not the less dangerous for that. Some of it is strong, full of abstract sense, and quite unanswerable from the point of view of one who believes in and aims at the ultimate greatest good of the greatest number. It is all interesting not so much as an expression of what, alas! we know only too well, the wretchedness of the poor, as of what they desire, believe in and hope for, as affording glimpses of what they imagine to be the true social state, of an ideal at which they aim. Whether our period of economical enterprise, unlimited competition, and unrestrained individualism, is the highest stage of human progress is to me very doubtful; and sometimes when I see the existing conditions of European (to say nothing of

American) social order, bad as they are for the mass alike of upper and of lower classes, I wonder whether our civilization can maintain itself against the forces which are banding together for the destruction of many of the institutions in which it is embodied, or whether we are not to have another period of decline, fall, and ruin and revival, like that of the first thirteen hundred years of our era. It would not grieve me much to know that this were to be the case. No man who knows what society at the present day really is, but must agree that it is not worth preserving on its present basis. . . .

We want much to hear of your being quite well again. I trust you did make a little visit to Ashfield. Write soon. Give my love to Gurney. . . .

To Miss Gaskell

FLORENCE, December 21, 1869.

. . . Florence has greatly changed since we were here together, . . . I hate Americanism out of America. . . . Here all that reminds me of Imperial Paris, or of Democratic New York is detestable, out of harmony with the nature of the land and with the spirit of the associations that belong to it. . . . Stendhal, who knew Italy better than any other foreigner ever knew her, used to look forward to "the two chambers" as the remedy for many of the evils in the character of the people. But he was mistaken, deceived by a natural hope. Constitutional government of the English type is not a panacea. Is it quite certain that it is the ultimate decree of absolute wisdom for England itself?

For my part I should think poorly of mankind if they did not before long discover some better political arrangements than any that have been tried as yet. But Italy has taken a Constitutional system, as a sick man takes a physician's prescription, and she is very uncomfortable from its effects. . . .

To J. R. Lowell

FLORENCE, February 24, 1870
VILLA D'ELCI, FUORI PORTA S. GALLO.

. . . I went to see old Seymour Kirkup.[1] He lives just the other side of the Ponte Vecchio, in the first house on the bank of the river to the left, and his windows look out on one of the most picturesque views in this city of picturesqueness, up and down the river, across it, by way of the heaped, irregular roofs of the Ponte Vecchio to the tower of the Old Palace and all the rest that you see with your eyes shut. You enter his apartment through the kitchen, which is tenanted by three or four females of various age who may be his servants or perhaps hold or have held a double relation to him, such as may exist with great simplicity in this liberal land. There is a completely Italian look about everything. The next room to the kitchen is a great antechamber, with windows on the river, and with the look of the room of an old artist and collector; — bookshelves crowded with dusty volumes, — you take down one and find it the Aldus Juvenal of 1501, another and it is the first edition of the Annotations of

[1] Seymour Stocker Kirkup (1788–1880), a notable figure in Florence; a painter, a friend of Haydon and Blake, present at the funerals of both Keats and Shelley.

the Deputies on the Decameron, another and it is an undated astrological tract of the 15th century, full of curious woodcuts. About the room on the walls, on tables, on chairs, in corners, are pictures, bits of old armour, old Japanese porcelain, terra cotta busts, Etruscan vases, fragments of marble bas-relief, — all covered with dust, and lying pell-mell.

I had seen all these before, but yesterday I was kept waiting while the old gentleman finished his dinner, and had time to look more carefully at some of the many objects that were worth seeing. One of the most striking is a bust in terra cotta of Machiavelli of which the face and a great part of the head were plainly formed from a cast of the living person. It is a better bust than the well-known one in the Uffizi, — more natural than that, and obviously full of the external semblance of the man. The large strong solid skull, and features, the low forehead, the fine ear, the deep-set wide eyes, the thick nose, the broad mouth with its large lips, the staunch chin, — all make up a head and unite in an expression of which the real meaning is as difficult to decipher as that of the works of the man who looks thus both fine and coarse, both noble and vulgar, both intellectual and sensual, both proud and mean. One sees the whole intricate and divided nature here. It is the Florentine Secretary, it is the hard drinker, boon-companion of the boors of Casciano.

On one of the walls hangs a picture by the old artist himself, of which he is justly rather proud. He showed it to me the other day when I first went to see him. He said: "Landor said to me that the finest line Dante

ever wrote was — Questi, che mai da me non fia diviso, (but he quoted it wrong and said *sia*), and I thought I would paint a picture from it. And so I painted this, long before Scheffer ever thought of it; and *he* put drapery on his figures which Dante never speaks of, but mine were naked spirits, — and I painted them whirled along in the bufera infernal, which is lighted up for a moment by a gleam of lightning, — that's a cold blue light, not good for a picture, so I never made a large painting of it. I had painted a good many pictures, but always from models whom I sometimes followed too closely, but this time I painted without a model, and you see how it turned out." I could praise it enough to please the old man, for there is a good deal of that sort of expression in it which he derived from his old master Fuseli. He was first set to study under Flaxman, and after being with him for more than a year Flaxman sent him to the Academy, where Fuseli took him as pupil.

By this time the dinner was over, and I went into his inner room, — to find the little, shrivelled, deaf, snuffy, dirty, garrulous, genial old fellow. The confusion of the antechamber is greater here, and the dirt is beyond what one is accustomed to even in out-of-the-way haunts in Florence. A beautiful shrill paroquet swings himself in a cage on the terra cotta stove, a big yellow cat, who has plainly been dining with his master, rubs himself purring against our legs. I try to make the old, bright-eyed man hear my greetings, but the parrot whistles so loud that my voice is drowned and I am made almost as deaf as the parrot's master.

The old man is pleased with my visit, he likes to talk and his memory is strong, and his faculties, except of hearing, seem as good as ever. There is no sign of mental weakness about him except his devotion to Spiritualism and its follies; but we do not wonder at old men who are devout Catholics, and the only advantage of Romanism over Spiritualism so far as superstition is concerned consists in the respectability that age has given it.

"When was I in England last? — why, not since 1816. I have not wanted to go, and now I am too old, — eighty-one years old. I can go out a little still, but not so far as that. Yes, I knew Blake well, and liked him, and respected him, for he was one of the honestest and most upright, and most sincere men I ever knew. I used to think him mad then, but I think now he was quite sound. There never was an honester man than he, or one who lived in a finer poverty, — poor but strictly simple in his habits. I remember his wife, who was a very nice good woman, once said to me, 'Oh I have very little of Mr. Blake's company, he passes all his life in Paradise.' — I began to collect editions of Dante and books about him about thirty-five years ago. I had become deaf, and I could not hear what my sitters said to me and I could not talk to them, and they used to drop asleep, — and then I could not go into society and get people to come and buy my pictures, — and so I gave up painting."

I got the old man to tell me the story of the discovery of the Giotto portrait of Dante, and of his getting his tracing from it. Dr. Paur has told it almost in Kirkup's

own words in his essay, "Dante's Portrait," but there was one good little incident that he does not tell. The jailor whom Kirkup bribed to let him in to take the sketch, did so on condition that he should come very early in the morning and not go away till after dark, that neither his coming nor going might be observed. "So," said Kirkup, "I got through my work, I had finished my tracing on talc, and I had made my study of the colours, and I had drawn the picture from below, — and then I ate my bread, and laid down on a heap of straw in the corner, and did not wake up till the jailor came to let me out."

His books and manuscripts would make me envious, if envy were of any use. Eight editions of the "Divina Commedia" before 1500, I know not how many from 1500 to 1550. Three or four precious manuscripts of the "Divina Commedia," one dated in 1360 odd; — and innumerable rarities relating to the poet, the poem or the minor works, such as you and I know the charm of. I suppose his books will be sent to Paris or London for sale, — but I have, ghoul-like, inspired a worthy bookseller here with a zeal to get them that I may, if I survive, have some of them! This is horrible, — but one does not want the old women in the kitchen to burn them. . . .

To John Ruskin

FLORENCE, March 31, 1870.

. . . As for myself I have been so far from strong that I have had to give up every hope and plan of work, and content myself with allowing Italy to pour itself

according to its own will into my soul. . . . But I have had so much happiness, I am so specially blessed in what is dearest to me, that I have neither the right nor the disposition to regret what is not mine. I believe that no one was ever happier than I in what is nearest to my heart. No man was ever happier in his love and in his friends. . . .

Mainly I have been studying Dante and Michel Angelo. I remember how crude was my talk to you about the latter when we first knew each other in 1856. . . . Michel seems to me one of the greatest and awkwardest of mankind. He never could express himself. Had he been able to do so he would have stood fairly and squarely side by side with Dante. There are many of his works that I cannot understand, but what I feel in them is a greatness quite beyond that of any artist since Giotto. The Laurentian (Medicean) chapel statues seem to me worthy to be set opposite the Elgin Marbles, — types of the highest expression of romantic art as the Greek works are of classic. I have been studying his poems which, till the edition of three or four years ago, have not been known as he wrote them. They are not the poems of a poet, but a few of them are poems which only a man of strong and high character could have written. The curious thing about them is the number of them that are purely cold, academic and perfunctory performances, — written because it was the fashion for men of note to write madrigals and sonnets. In this mode, Lorenzo de' Medici wrote much better than this grandest of modern artists.

There is no other artist so puzzling as this, — none with so much power combined with so little taste, none so sensitive at once and so cold, none alike so academic and so original, none so formal and so free. I have been working a little at his letters. They do not solve the puzzle, — the solution is in the sharp contrast between his nature and his times. In 1300 he would have been consistent with himself, — in 1500 the conditions under which he grew to knowledge of himself made consistency impossible. . . .

To Mrs. Andrews Norton

ROME, April 18 (Monday), 1870.

MY DEAREST MOTHER, — . . . Did I tell you in my note of yesterday that we are to dine with the Actons[1] to-morrow? He occupies a very important and very interesting position here, — the lay head of the opposition to the Ultra-Clerical party. I had a long and truly interesting talk with him concerning the Council and the Church two or three days ago. He is a real personage at present, and if the interior history of the Council is ever written he will have a large part in it.

De Vere is sweet, refined and lovable as ever, and far more in his native element in Rome than in England. He came to see us yesterday, bringing with him Father Hecker[2] who is a man of some consequence in Rome, and seems to have been talking a good deal of Americanism to the Jesuits. He is a good specimen of the Romanized American, or vice versa. . . .

[1] Lord Acton was at this time closely identified with Döllinger in opposing the new dogma of the Immaculate Conception.

[2] Israel Thomas Hecker, founder of the Paulist order.

To Mrs. Andrews Norton

Wednesday Evening, April 20, 1870. Rome.

My dearest Mother, — Day before yesterday in the evening we had the fireworks, and to-night we have an illumination. It is very pretty; the obelisk is ablaze from its base to its summit, lines of lights mark the terraces of the Pincio, the little spire of Sta. Maria del Popolo is lighted up, — down the Via del Babuino, the Corso, and the Ripetta there is what a reporter would call a blaze of light; and all through the city are special centres of brightness of lamps and of fireworks, while every street is lighted up with little paper lanterns at windows and doors, according to the devotion or the gratitude or the timidity or the lavishness of the dwellers in its houses. All this show is in honour of the Pope. It is his anniversary day, and his commemoration day in remembrance of the miraculous escape at Sta. Agnese. Every show in Rome of this sort is a little more brilliant than usual out of regard to the Council. The six hundred Bishops are to see Rome at its best, and they themselves are a good part of the show. The Council makes Rome more ecclesiastical by far than ever, — for the bishops not only bring with them but attract also a host of clerical dignitaries and simple priests, so that the outward aspect of the city is affected by their numbers, while the talk and the thoughts of all people capable of thought (who are, alas! a very small minority of the natives or visitors) are occupied greatly with the proceedings of the Council, and with speculations as to its course. And quite justly so, — for the Council

is a great historic event, and whatever its direct issue its indirect results will have a large place in the history of the next generation. The Council of Rome may be quite as important, and will certainly be as famous as the Council of Trent. Of the separate members of the Council one may see many and much, — but of the Council as a body the outside world gets few glimpses. The first public session is to be held next Sunday, and I am tempted to stay to witness it; — but as no one is to be admitted to the hall of meeting, and the only publicity is that of having the door thrown open and part of the partition taken down between the transept, in which the council is held, and the nave of St. Peter's, there is little chance for more than a distant view of bishops and Pope. To-morrow we shall decide whether we start for home [Florence] on Saturday or Monday.

We had a truly pleasant dinner at the Actons' last night. Lady Acton is a very refined and sweet person, but not in good health, and last night so unwell that she did not add much to the animation of the party. Lord Acton's grandmother is a fine, sprightly old lady, at least eight or ten years older than you, and with a character and vivacity of mind that would attract you at once. Mr. Childers,[1] the First Lord of the Admiralty, dined with us, and was quite charming, — one of the solid, strong, well-mannered, quiet, genial Englishmen. . . . Just as we came away the famous Mrs. Craven [2] entered. . . . Sue had as pleasant a time as I, having found the ladies charming from their good manners,

[1] Hugh C. E. Childers, subsequently Chancellor of Exchequer, etc., etc.
[2] Mrs. Augustus Craven, author of *Récit d'une Sœur*, etc.

their ease, and their amiability. Acton was to have dined with us to-day, but just before dinner we received a note from him to say that his wife had a feverish attack so severe as to require the doctor, and to make him solicitous, and that consequently he could not come to us. . . .

I went with de Vere yesterday afternoon to see Archbishop Manning. He is wonderfully little changed in twelve years, — but he is a more conspicuous man now, and as archbishop is compelled to a somewhat different manner from that which he used to cultivate. He has no pretension of dignity, but a little less marked air of humility. I was struck as of old with the subtlety of his mental processes, a subtlety by which reasoning is often substituted for reason, and a clever distinction made to play the part of an independent truth. He was a little acrid and bitter in speaking of the opposition in the Council, — he, as you know, being one of the most prominent advocates for the definition of the dogma of infallibility. "There are not ten men in the Council," he said, "who would deny the truth of the doctrine. The whole opposition to it is based on what is called 'opportunity.' And now, as the Civiltà Cattolica well said the other day, the word opportunity is found but three times in the Gospel, and the passages are parallel, namely 'And Judas sought an *opportunity* to betray Him.' That's it; opportunity means personal interest of one sort or another." — And so he went on. This citation with approval of the silly reference to the Civiltà surprised me. It was bad taste at least. . . .

To Eliot Norton

ROME, April 17, 1870.

MY DEAREST BOY, — Your little note to Mamma and me, which you wrote to us more than a week ago only came to us yesterday, having been delayed at Terni, where it had first been sent. We were very glad to get it at last — and so you want to have a bow. Don't you think you could get Turella to make one for you? You know the Italian word for bow is "arco." Or, perhaps, Antonio has come home, and he would make one. And if nobody will make one I am willing you should have one bought in Florence, on condition that you are very careful never to use it when the children are in front of you. I hope you will become as good archer as Robin Hood or William Tell.

I wish you were here with us. I should like to show you the bridge which stands in the place of the one from which Horatius Cocles leapt into the Tiber, and to go with you to the place where Curtius is said to have leapt into the Gulf which closed over him. I should like to show you many famous places and things and to have you see to-night the beautiful illumination of St. Peter's.

Give my love and kisses to Sally, Lily and Margaret. I hope that *conduite* is always *parfaite*. Remember you must take my place when I am away.

Good night, my dear Eliot,

Your loving FATHER.

To John Ruskin

(May, 1870.)

. . . Rome retains something still of its prerogative of immobility, — and resists with steady persistency the flood of "American" barbarism and of universal materialism which is desolating Europe. It is conservative not only in good old ways, but in bad ones also. It clings indiscriminately to what has been, — it cherishes (not alone in the physical world) dirt, ruin, and malaria. . . .

I have not been well during the winter, and have had to submit to one more disappointment and give up the plans of work that I had looked forward to accomplishing. I do not think I have been *sad*, as François[1] represented. I have been sober, which is a very different thing, — and I shall never be anything else in my inmost moods. Love and care that comes with love, desire to be of service to one's world and inability to fulfil one's desire, the sense of the useless and needless misery among men, the living in a time in which one is out of sympathy with the ruling motives of the mass of men and women who surround them, — all this, and the education of children and much else, and the uncertainty of life not for one's-self but for others, are much more than enough to make one serious. But I believe in not being sad, I believe cheerfulness to be part of godliness, part too of the best humanity. And of all men I have least excuse for sadness. . . .

[1] A devoted servant, who had given Ruskin a disquieting report of Norton's health.

Of his health and working power at this time Norton had written from Florence to Lowell (January 16, 1870): "I wish I could work as you do, but I am not up to much real labour. I am worn out easily if I try to work hard. I am not idle, but I must busy myself more with learning a little than producing anything. I am reading much Florentine history, and studying Dante and Michel Angelo." Writing again to Lowell from Siena (June 7, 1870), he said: "I have brought many books with me here, and hope to do some work during the summer. I find the temptation increase to spend my time in learning, — and to do nothing in the way of production. Here, where one feels every day more and more, how much there is to learn, and how interesting it all is, — and how much men have done that was worth doing, and how little one can hope to do, — I grow, perhaps, half selfishly, certainly fastidiously, disinclined to work with any immediate concern for aught but my own culture. I must come home and become a professor before this repugnance can be conquered. Perhaps it is due to my having been, for a year or more, less strong than usual, so that hard work has been impossible for me. I am sometimes inclined to think that simply to cultivate one's-self, is perhaps the best service an American can render in these days, when men are so ready to desert the highest paths, and to devote themselves body and soul to 'getting on' in lower ways."

A passage from a long letter to Chauncey Wright (June 12, 1870) pictures the surrounding at Siena, in which Norton was laying the foundation for an

important chapter in his "Historical Studies of Church Building in the Middle Ages": "I am writing under great difficulties, — and had better betake myself to some subject on which preciseness of expression is less desirable. Grace is reading aloud in the next room a number of 'Edwin Drood,' and, though the door is shut, every word comes plainly to my ear, and I weakly cannot help being distracted by Dickens' unparalleled vivacity and picturesqueness. We have been here now for almost a fortnight and are most pleasantly settled for the summer in a great old-fashioned Villa, — about as big as the Tremont House, — clean and cheerful and comfortable within, with an air of old-fashioned elegance about arrangement and furniture, — and situated in the midst of a country of delightful beauty. All is thoroughly Italian, — from the little family Chapel with its memorial tablets on the walls, and silver crucifix and candlesticks on the altar, to the spacious hall hung with Venetian mirrors, and the little terraced garden, and the little plot of ornamental wood beyond in which is a rural Robinson Crusoe hut, and a monument of white marble to a faithful dog.

The villa lies surrounded by a great *podere* or farm, and beyond the cypress-bordered avenues lie olive orchards and fields of grain, and all the pretty varieties of the scenery of a hill and valley farm. Little grass paths lead through the cultivated fields, between rows of vines, down into the valley through which runs a little brook, and up the opposite bank, till half a mile off they reach on either side, one of the roads toward

VILLA SPANNOCCHI, SIENA

Siena. The city gate is a mile and a half from us, and we see from our windows the picturesque old wall overtopped by the tall tower of the Palace of the Republic, by the campanile, and by the great front and roof of the beautiful Cathedral. But the view is too various and too beautiful to be described."

How "thoroughly Italian" life in the Villa Spannocchi was, the following entry from Norton's notebook under date of October 12, 1870, gives a further suggestion:—

Last evening, just before sunset, as Sue and I returned from our drive, there was a young fellow from Siena playing the *organino* (accordeon) by our door, to the delight of the children of the contadini. He was, they said, a member of the band, — a friend of one of the young contadini. He played very nicely, — and Sue asked him to come into the cortile, where it was more sheltered, and the music would sound clearer. He came in, the contadini following; a light was brought, the twilight came in through the wide door, and there, ranged round the wall, some on seats, some on the floor, assembled the whole household of contadini, from the grey old *capoccio* to little black-haired Antonio, — and all our little children, and Jane and Sue, and our servants — a picturesque group listening to the good-natured musician as he played and sang. Sally was greatly pleased to hear the pretty air of "Napoleone vatene da Roma" played with its precise notes.

To John Ruskin

VILLA SPANNOCCHI, SIENA, June 15, 1870.

It was a great comfort to me to get your letter last night, with its fairly good news of you. It came to me at the end of the day that had been saddened by the news of Dickens's death. What a loss to mankind, — the man who has done most in his time to make the hearts of men cheerful and kindly, and to draw them together in sympathy and good-will. . . .

Just at this time England can ill spare such a leader in the uncertain battle in which you and all other humane and thoughtful and patriotic men are engaged. The prospect of the field, dark enough before, grows visibly darker, with the loss of one who so long had been among the foremost in the struggle. Dickens took the most serious view of the conditions of society in England. The last long talk I had with him was very striking from the display of his clear, strong, masculine sense as to the nature of the evils that are imperilling the foundations of the state, and as to the remedies for them, — combined with an almost tragic intensity of feeling, and prophetic vigour of expression. We were waiting for a train, and as we walked up and down the platform, he seemed so strong and likely to live long, that I thought of him as almost certain to come to the fore in case of any sudden terrible overflow of the ignorance, misery and recklessness which the selfishness of the upper classes has fostered, and which now, as Dickens believed, are far more threatening to those classes than they seem to have the power of conceiving.

"If the storm once sets in, it will be nothing short of a tornado, and will sweep down old fences."[1]

He would have read your Inaugural[2] with the deepest interest.

Thank you for sending it to me, and for the other sheets. I have been reading it this morning. . . . With what seems to me a too narrow patriotism I should quarrel. I believe it better, a higher ideal, to endeavour to make one's nation only *prima inter pares*, and not to encourage that spirit of jealous superiority which has been, as I read history, the curse of Greece and of England alike. Make England beautiful and strong, but believe that she can be neither beautiful nor strong, unless side by side with her the other civilized powers and countries grow beautiful and strong also. England cannot be selfishly saved.

But what a perverse spirit I am to find fault, where mainly I admired with no stinted admiration, and learned, as I read, to be humble.

Your scheme of instruction, and your generous execution of it ought to be of the utmost service not only to the students who may attend your lectures, but in raising the level of general instruction at Oxford, and stimulating all good culture. I rejoice for you, and I am glad for Oxford that you are filling this post.

And now for plans. I want you very much to come here, not only because I want to see you, but because I

[1] "I know, too well," Ruskin wrote to Norton, June 17, 1870, "the truth of what Dickens told you of the coming evil." See *Letters of John Ruskin to Charles Eliot Norton*, vol. ii, 4.

[2] In February, 1870, Ruskin began his lectures as Slade Professor of Art at Oxford.

think you would like to see this landscape that surrounds us, and because there is much in Siena which would be serviceable to you as illustration and example in your Oxford courses. The remains of Italian gothic building, both public and domestic, are more numerous than in any city south of Verona; and the use of brick in the Renaissance buildings (especially by Peruzzi) is instructive and often delightful in the highest degree. There are brick dwelling houses here which are charming both in proportion and adornment, and which are as cheap as charming. They could be built cheaply in England or America to-day, and would be both suitable to our needs and beautiful in themselves. There is much else to see. . . .

To John Simon

VILLA SPANNOCCHI, SIENA.
June 14, 1870.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — We thank you for the thoughtful and sympathetic kindness of your note which came to us with its heavy burden of sad news this morning. No death, except of one of the few friends within the closest circle of affection, could touch us more deeply than this. But the sense of personal loss is quite overpowered by that of sharing in a great public sorrow. Dickens was loved and will be mourned by greater multitudes than ever any other man. To men and women all the world over he has been like a personal friend. His unparalleled power of sympathy with all sorts and conditions of men, the breadth and generosity of his appreciation of human nature, and his faith-

ful, almost passionate devotion of his powers to its service, won him such love as no other man has had the happiness to enjoy. Sweet, simple, strong, in the consciousness and enjoyment of this love, he grew sweeter, simpler, and stronger every day. I never knew a famous and flattered man so utterly unhurt by it all, — and what man ever was flattered in like measure? The better one knew him the more one loved him.

To die so loved, in the fulness of power, after a life spent in rendering equal pleasure and service to mankind, and to die by such a sudden stroke, is for him a happy fate. (How rarely is death to be regretted for any one!) But what an extinction of genius it is! What broad currents of human charity stop with the beating of that heart! His death makes the world, for the moment, seem half empty. How he had peopled it! How he had helped it!

I have just been looking at his last letter to me, written on the eighth of March. Like most last letters it is full of words very touching when read in the light of the later event. He wrote in excellent spirits. "The Readings have been splendidly successful. The last but one is to-night, and the last of all this night week. They have not prevented my working hard at my book, and I am well ahead. Furthermore I am well in all respects. You will see changes at Gad's Hill when you next come there for some summer days."

He adds a little postscript about his interview with the Queen, and then the last words are, "Again love." Pleasant words to hold as the last in one's memory!

Thanks to your kindness, the numbers of "Edwin

Drood" came to us about a week ago. In reading them it seemed to me that Dickens had never written better, or with greater freshness and variety of power. Where is the end of the story now? His loss in his own home is the going out of its joy. The sorrow there, is to us the chief sadness connected with his death. . . .

Soon after the death of Dickens, Ruskin joined Norton in Italy, and after a day or two spent in Florence, the two friends travelled together to Pisa, Lucca, Pistoia and Prato, Norton returning thence to Siena.

To Mrs. C. E. Norton

HOTEL VITTORIA, PISA, July 1, 1870.

. . . Ruskin and his party reached the hotel just five minutes after I had arrived last night, and were surprised enough to see me. He is very well, and is really enjoying Pisa. We have spent most of the morning in the Cathedral and the Campo Santo, — with great interest. No judgment to revise, but many half, and uncertain opinions confirmed. Ruskin's eye as usual wonderfully quick and true in discernment; and his views most helpful and instructive. We divide, however, on one point; he likes the Gothic used merely as a decoration without regard to its essential principles as in S. Maria della Spina, — I, while admitting that it is very pretty and picturesque, think the building bad from the want of proper construction, and believe that a much prettier, more picturesque and more pleasing building could have been erected had the essential laws

of Gothic construction been followed. But the Italians never understood Gothic.

Ruskin is fired with the desire to obtain permission to keep the Spina in order at his own expense. I think he will make the effort to have the maintenance of it allowed to him. I wish he may succeed, — for all that binds him to art and art work is happy for him. I shall do all I can to help him. . . ."

To Mrs. C. E. Norton

FLORENCE, GRANDE BRETAGNE, July 3, 1870.

. . . After an interesting morning in the Campo Santo yesterday we came on to Lucca, and had a very pleasant and interesting afternoon in that charming old town; . . . The Square on which the cathedral stands is delightfully Italian. Indeed the whole city is little hurt by this destructive and unpleasant century of ours. It still is Italian, almost Italianissimo. . . . Ruskin had been very sorry to leave Pisa. It is so long since he was last there, he has thought and learned so much since then, he has so much to study and to think about now, that he was almost overworked. Knowing Pisa so well as I do, it was a great pleasure and help to be there with him, to learn what his marvellous powers had to teach, and to exchange impressions and opinions with him. . . .

This morning we left Pistoia too early to see anything of it, and were at Prato soon after nine. It was a great festa at the Duomo, and I have seen no more striking exhibition of Italian superstition than that afforded by the people laying their pence on the altar, and

kissing it. It was a scene of pure Romanism, and reminded me of Benares. The Duomo is a provincial Cathedral, and even Donatello becomes countrified and rude in his work on the pulpit outside. It is indeed, so far as proportions and moulding and ornament are concerned, a beautiful pulpit, but the sculptural panels of dancing and singing children are far inferior to those of Lucca.

But I have hardly words to express my admiration for Filippo Lippi's frescoes in the choir. You must see them next autumn. . . . I left Ruskin in the choir about to draw a noble and refined head of Lippi himself, — I came away sorry to part from him. . . .

To Miss Gaskell

SIENA, VILLA SPANNOCCHI, July 12, 1870.

. . . Ruskin's powers of observation and perception are simply genius. . . . In Florence we went, among other places, to the Academy, and I showed him my favourite Filippo Lippis, — the little Annunciation, and the Coronation of the Virgin. . . . He had had no special knowledge of Lippi, but had taken the common, Vasari story about him as true, had accepted Browning's vigorous but altogether mistaken delineation of him as exact, and had in short fancied him an immoral monk of some native power, turned painter. . . . When afterward we saw Filippo's frescoes in the apse of the Duomo, at Prato, I thought Ruskin was right in regarding the mourning around the bier of S. Stephen as marking the highest line of the true old Florentine

school.[1] The decline is visible in Ghirlandaio, is sadly evident in Filippino Lippi. . . .

Here at Siena there is much of interest. The Cathedral is very fine in many respects; — it is in part the most picturesque building in Italy. . . . But the best of the place is its mediævalism. Siena is still Italian of the true stamp; — it is almost pure old Italy of the days before the tyrants were driven out and America was discovered. It is, as the Germans say, *Vormärzlich*, not yet revolutionized, — free from the taint of the ten per cent stock-broking age. One can rest here. No compatriots intrude on this sacred solitude. The people are sweet-natured, gentle and for the most part well off. There is little misery to wring one's heart, and one can give to beggars without compunction. In fact if the world were not so bad, and if America in especial were better, — I could be content to live here. . . . But with you attending Educational Conventions, with my dear friend Godkin editing "The Nation," with every friend I have in the pell-mell of the fight with the devil and his allies, I am now only waiting for the opportunity to rush in at a fair moment for dealing a good blow, and getting out of breath like the rest. . . .

Norton's notebooks of these years contain many references to his children — he records their sayings

[1] In another letter Norton recurs to this subject. "The Venetians," he says, "alone have known what *painting* meant. But Fra Filippo, though he could not reach the true art of painting, knew more of it than any other Tuscan. He is the largest, the freest, the most modern of all the men who painted here after Giotto's day."

which amuse and please him; the sights or "shows" he takes them to see; and in his letters to them, when absent for a few days, one reads his constant thought of them and his pleasure in their games and ways and company. "They are growing up too fast," he writes to Lowell, "but they are more childlike and simple in their tastes and ways than most of the children of the same ages that I see." The lack of these qualities in the young he deplored always. As his own boys and girls grew up, his relation to the children of his friends showed his real interest in childhood.

"The children" and memoranda in regard to work he is engaged upon jostle each other in Norton's Italian note-books: — but chief in the realm of work and books at this time are Siena and Venice. On Christmas day, 1870, he writes from Florence, to Lowell, "I studied a long time in the archives of Siena, which are marvellously rich in matter relating to the political and social condition of Italy during the Middle Ages, and I have got the history of the Duomo pretty well written out, with many new documents. Since Ruskin's visit to us, at the end of June, I have literally seen no man with whom it was worth while to talk much, and have led a thoroughly domestic life."

Later he writes: "I have been keeping pretty steadily at Venice, pegging away at Cicognara's bulky and close-printed quartos, and at Muratori's still bulkier folios, — and living as much in the old days with very excellent company, as in our own. Muratori's and Cicognara's columns cannot be looked down as rapidly

as those of the 'Times,' — but one learns to skip here and there."

To G. W. Curtis

SIENA, July 26, 1870.

. . . Here in this old town which has seen so much bloodshed in its streets and round its walls to so little purpose, here where the passions of men have burned so hot, and where life has been so full of hazard and adventure, — there is hardly an echo of the great war.[1] Our little newspaper comes out regularly on Sunday morning, and gives us the week-old news. To be sure during the week it has published two or three supplements, as large as this sheet, and printed on one side. To be sure, too, we get every day the Florence papers, and know by their report what is happening in the far away world. But Siena is tranquil. Her fighting days are over. She belongs to the Middle Ages, — to the times of battle axe and lance "that for the Cross made crashing room," not to those of needle-gun, chassepot, and mitrailleuses.

The threshing floor, just a little way from these windows, where, in this beautiful summer sunlight, a dozen men and women and boys are at this moment busy beating out the grain, is the very picture and emblem of peace and plenty and contented labour. The Sienese peasants are a sweet and cheerful people; nowhere in Italy are there pleasanter manners or pleasanter speech. But this floor where the threshing

[1] This letter was written only a week after the beginning of the Franco-Prussian War.

is going on reminds me of the field where, perhaps, to-day the harvest of men is reaping. The thought makes me heart-sick, — and brings memories of better and sadder battles.

I left my letter here, and come back to it in the evening. I wrote the other day a letter of introduction to you for two excellent young Englishmen, — one Mr. Bryce, the author of the able History of the Holy Roman Empire, the other Mr. Albert Dicey (brother of Edward), who are going to America together for a few months. Bryce is now Professor at Oxford; he is greatly and deservedly esteemed as a sound thinker and scholar. . . .

To Chauncey Wright

VILLA SPANNOCCHI, SIENA
September 13, 1870.

. . . Once a week comes the best of all possible journals, "The Nation," and I find it at once the support and the disappointment of my Americanism. I am American only so far as our political and social systems are, to use your favourite phrase, in accordance with the principles of utilitarianism, and there are plainly many efforts to be made and many disappointments and failures to be achieved before the accordance becomes in any good degree complete. I don't know whether I have expressed the thought to you in any one of my former letters or not, but even if I have done so it will bear repetition, that in spite of all the tremendous disadvantages under which England is labouring she is essentially in advance of us in regard to the ulti-

mate settlement of the main social problems, on account of the more solid training and the more serious temper of her best men, as compared with those of our best men. "Best" men are indeed few in either country, but their influence is very strong on great numbers, and frames a temper which by degrees becomes national. No best man with us has done more to influence the nation than Emerson, — but the country has in a sense outgrown him. He was the friend and helper of its youth; but for the difficulties and struggles of its manhood we need the wisdom of the reflective and rational understanding, not that of the intuitions. Emerson (like most original men of the intuitive order) is in some sort the contemporary of his youth. He belongs to the pure and innocent age of the Presidency of Monroe or John Quincy Adams, — to the time when Plancus was Consul, — to the day of Cacciaguida; he is as remote almost from us as Plato himself. But we have nobody to take his place in supplying us with the thought itself on which the spiritual growth in good of the nation mainly depends. Really the "Nation" and the "North American" are almost the only evidences of thought in America, and they drag out a difficult existence in the midst of the barbaric wealth of the richest millions of people in the world!

Now in England there is abundance of contemporary thought; abundance of solid reasoning faculty applied to the difficulties of the time; abundance of the strong convictions and firm principles that result from the possession and exercise of trained and disciplined reason. And instead of there being a decline in serious-

ness and in thoughtfulness, and in respect for devotion to intellectual pursuits, there is a marked revival of (mainly under the stimulus of Mill) and interest in the higher branches of speculation, in philosophy as applied to life, in a word, in the pursuit of wisdom for her own sake, and for utilitarian ends, using the epithet in its best and largest significance. The "Fortnightly Review" affords good indication of the range and vigour of English thinking, — and of the rapid increase in England of a class of men with settled principles and solid acquisition, but with open candid minds. Frederic Harrison's recent articles have seemed to me remarkable in many respects, while Mill has hardly supported himself at his usual level. I doubt whether Mill's interest in the cause of woman is serviceable to him as a thinker. It has a tendency to develop the sentimental part of his intelligence, which is of immense force, and has only been kept in due subjection by his respect for his own reason. This respect diminishes under the powerful influence of his daughter, Miss Taylor, who is an admirable personage doubtless, but is what, were she of the sex that she regards as inferior, would be called decidedly priggish. Her self-confidence, which embraces her confidence in Mill, is tremendous, and Mill is overpowered by it. Her words have an oracular value to him, — something more than their just weight; and her unconscious flattery, joined with the very direct flattery of many other prominent leaders of the great female army, have a not unnatural effect on his tender, susceptible and sympathetic nature. In putting the case so strongly I

perhaps define it with too great force, but you can make the needful allowance for the over-distinctness of words. . . .

I have been working of late a good deal in the Archives of Siena, which are uncommonly rich and well arranged. My special point has been the history of the Cathedral, but incidentally I have been led into various interesting, or at least curious, researches. With the contracts, the wills, the accounts of the men and women of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries in one's hands, one acquires soon a strong feeling of and for their real characters and life. How can one help being touched when he finds an entry made by a father in the year 1348 — the year of the great plague, made famous by Boccaccio — of his having buried with his own hands his five children in one grave? Or when one reads a manuscript and unpublished narrative of the Battle of Montaperti which was fought in 1260, and was as decisive a victory of the Sienese over the Florentines, as Sedan is of Prussians over French, written by a man who says: Fuitque numerus occisoorum, sicut estimare *potui qui astabam*, mille ducentorum virorum, sed undecim milium fuit numerus captivorum ex quibus ultra octo milia fame et inedia in carceribus perierunt?

I have little heart to write of the actual war. You will know before this reaches you whether Paris is besieged or not. The prospect of this — of the long train of miseries that it opens — makes me very heavy-hearted. A siege of Paris means, I fear, protracted anarchy and a new *terreur* in France.

I must say Good-night. I want much to hear in detail of your preparations for your lectures. Write to me, I beg you, about them. How much I lose by being away from home! — among other good things the chance of being "led" still further "astray" by you!

You will be glad to hear that my Mother is doing well. She awaits me now for her customary game of whist. . . .

To John Ruskin

VILLA SPANNOCCHI, September 29, 1870.

If it had been possible for you to be with us to-day I should have been glad, — for the day has been as beautiful as the days in June when you were with us here, — and in this golden hazy tranquil day, with its pathetic autumnal lights, the vintage has begun, and all day have the contadini been cutting the great bunches of grapes and filling their baskets with them, and pouring them from baskets into *bigonce*, and loading the oxcarts with the *bigonce*, and driving up through the podere to the villa. Eliot has "vendemmiäed" with them, and, indeed, everybody on the estate old and young have turned out to help in the pleasantest, prettiest, and most poetic of hard work. You would no doubt find it quite intolerable, this plucking of the beautiful fruit, this crushing of the loveliest living amethystine and aquamarine globes. You would for the moment, unless retained by grateful filial piety, regard wine as the invention of the devil, and find in this pretty vintage a very good argument (as good as any) for the fall of man, original sin, and

all other cheerfully damnable doctrines on which the stoutest souls the world has ever known have thrived. The knotty, stunted, twisted, bent cedars that grow on the seashore, where they have to battle with the northeasters and the salt spray of the illimitable ocean, are of course of stouter fibre than these flexible vines, than these soft cypresses. But, but, but, but — if fighting is after all not the best work? If Cromwells and Covenanters belong to the paleozoic age, and we are, — when this war between Prussia and France is fought out, and other wars are fought out, — to enter on the age to which you and I belong and to invent a higher and completer type of man, a sweeter and fuller idea of life than has yet existed in the world?

At any rate would that you had been here to-day. Benozzo Gozzoli never painted prettier pictures than the scenes of real life that we have been seeing.

I spent three or four hours of the morning in the excellent old public Library of the City looking over some of the manuscripts relating to the Duomo. Such a building collects around itself a vast heap of writing in the course of centuries, — a heap of dust and rubbish mainly, — but with a fact in it every now and then worth hunting for. I think I can make a good story out of the abundance of raw material. . . .

To Miss Gaskell

VILLA DELL' OMBRELLINO
BELLOSGUARDO, FLORENCE, January 2, 1871.

MY DEAREST META, . . . I have just been reading the concluding volume of the "Earthly Paradise." It

is charming from its fluency, facility and picturesqueness, but I find myself wishing that Morris had but known that half is better than the whole. He, like all other modern, I mean recent, poets, seems to lack the sense of form. The idea of an art which should inform a whole poem, subordinating its parts in due degree, omitting nothing essential to perfectness, admitting nothing superfluous, — the idea of a poem as an organic work of art seems to have died out of literature, and the result is that we get such monstrous things as the "Ring and the Book," such wastes of verse as even this volume of my dear Morris's. Perhaps I am too critical, — but in the "Lovers of Gudrun" he had come so near giving us a complete poem, one with form so wrought that it might be enduring, that I regret that in this volume he should not have supported himself at his former height.[1] . . .

I have been living mainly on Italian Chronicles and cinquecento biographies. How this people kept any spark of sweetness and charity and humanity alive through the burnings and massacres of the middle ages and through the wanton wickedness of the Renaissance, must always be a matter of wonder. And now, if one knows how to live with them, they are the sweetest people on earth. If I ever come back, may I be born Italian. . . .

[1] The first two parts of Morris's *Earthly Paradise* appeared in 1861, the rest in 1869 and 1870. On December 21, 1869, Morris wrote to Norton: "I don't know if you have my book by this time, or have begun to deal with its somewhat elephantine bulk, which I should feel penitent about only it is principally caused by the length of 'Gudrun' which I feel sure is the best thing I have done."

In the early summer of 1871 Norton and his family spent some weeks in Venice; in July they turned their faces northward and came to Innsbruck, and by the autumn were established in Dresden for the winter.

Writing from Innsbruck to Curtis, Norton describes Ruskin's "old and tried friend" Rawdon Brown, whose apartment in the Casa della Vida, on the reach of the Grand Canal just above the Ca' d' Oro, was full of Venetian treasures. There Norton saw him often, and there they talked of the things they both loved so well. In the "Atlantic Monthly" Norton recorded a bit of that talk, and related an episode of vivid picturesqueness linking the old antiquary — "retired himself to Italy" — with Shakespeare's "banished Norfolk," whose grave "in that pleasant country's earth" Rawdon Brown, with pious devotion, had discovered and cared for.[1]

To G. W. Curtis

INNSBRUCK, July 29, 1871.

. . . [In Venice] I saw much of old Rawdon Brown who has lived for forty years in Venice, and still keeps all that is good of old-fashioned England in his thoughts and heart and style; a generous old antiquary with strong prejudices and a tender heart; with a lover-like devotion to his friends, and a profession of hatred of all the world beside. Venice has been his only mistress, and to her he has given his life. "Thank God," said he to me one day, "the same charm that

[1] See "Rawdon Brown and the Gravestone of 'Banished Norfolk,'" by C. E. Norton, in *Atlantic Monthly*, June, 1889.

filled my eyes with tears when I first looked out on the faded glories of Venice still holds and possesses me now. It is the city of the world, — the only city where putting aside its history and all that makes it famous and beautiful you have activity without bustle, animation without noise." I too should like to spend forty years in Venice, living mainly with the dead, who are such good company when they are such men as sustained the Venetian Republic, built the Venetian palaces, and were painted by Titian, Giorgione, and Tintoret. . . .

To John Ruskin

INNSBRUCK, July, 1871.

. . . It was with a homesick sinking of the heart that I left Italy. . . . We left it in the fulness of its summer beauty, and we had had its best at the last in spending at Venice and Verona our last weeks in Italy.

The greatness of Venice during her great period impressed itself more strongly on me the more I had opportunity of studying it. There has been nothing like it in our modern epoch. And it is all the more striking and saddening, all the more complete in its effect upon the imagination, from there being no trace left of the old Venetian genius, spirit and character. The city is merely the monument of the past, with which its present inhabitants have no connection. In other cities even where there is more ruin, as in Rome, or where the political change has been as great, as in Florence, there is no such complete moral and social gulf between present and past; some splendour of life is

still left in their palaces, some natural enforced activity in their market places, some vigour in the views of their people. The Venetian palaces are more melancholy, used as hotels and shops, than they could be as ruins; and the city is a mere show and spectacle as the scenes on the stages of its own theatres.

For largeness of design within the limits of the State, for method of policy, for gravity of purpose, for splendour in life in the union of beauty with strength, elegance with force, luxury with self-control, Venice and the Venetians of old were never matched in history. . . .

Tintoret seems to me to have given the completest expression of the great qualities of Venice at the moment when they had reached their consummation, and the decline was setting in. His pictures, especially his portraits, show that he was burdened by the sadness of prophetic anticipations of the fate of the city which he was making more glorious than she had ever before been. His great imagination, — incomparably the greatest that ever displayed itself in painting, — abstracted and embodied Venice in his pictures, so that from them alone, if all other record were lost, the main traits of her faith and her *genius* might be deduced and asserted with confidence. Like all men who through imagination become universal, the roots of his power strike deep into his native soil. He is essentially and purely Venetian. The local and individual truth rendered through the imagination becomes universal.

When he fails to be Venetian, when he paints pictures for churches based not upon a Bible story or old

legend, but upon monkish or ecclesiastical conceptions, as for example the last Judgment in the Madonna dell' Orto, he falls into extravagances, coldnesses and untruths, like all other painters who have tried to depict such things, and even exceeds them according to the measure of his fancy. Even in other pictures his fancy is sometimes too strong for him, and he gives up truth-telling and becomes so far uninteresting. But considering that he painted more than all the other Venetian masters of his day put together, that he was never idle, that his imagination was never in repose, it is astonishing that he did so little that is trivial, or that bears signs of weariness or exhaustion.

His perfect acquaintance with the resources and methods of his art gives to his work an ease and vigour such as only Titian and Paul at their best have shown. The comparison between his swift perfection and the slow Florentine careful execution, and the dashing inaccuracy and truthlessness of Rubens is most instructive. The Venetian artists, and he at the head of them, *painted;* most of the Florentines, Michel Angelo at their head, only made coloured drawings.

While Tintoret is executing his spiritual visions with unparallelled facility, hand and head working together with entire accord, M. A. is elaborating the conceptions of his powerful intellect which rarely become fused into poetry in the fires of the imagination. Tintoret had little praise in his life time and worked apparently with no hindering self-consciousness whatever. . . . Tintoret seems never to have been troubled by his knowledge, Michel seems to have been burdened with

his. He tries to put too much into his works; too much anatomy, too strong expression, too strongly marked action, and becomes thus the head and exemplar of Academicians.

But I must go on at some other time; I am writing too much for you till you are stronger. One word more so as not to be misinterpreted, — Michel is great (it seems to me) even in his faults. He had a difficult, over-analytic genius, in the strongest opposition to the simpler though rich genius of Tintoret. . . .

Writing a year earlier to his Mother from Rome, Norton said of Michel Angelo: "The Sistine Chapel is unquestionably, undeniably, absolutely and authoritatively *immense* in its Michel Angelesque part. There is nothing like it in the world. Awkward, ill designed so far as constructive architecture of the ceiling is concerned, occupied with childish or superstitious subjects, — the work done by Michel Angelo is work of the highest genius, and still more of the most distinct individuality, and of very strong and pure character." [1]

To G. W. Curtis

DRESDEN, 9 Räcknitz Strasse, November 17, 1871.

Your portrait stands on the shelf of my writing-table, and almost persuades me that we have not been parted so long as the calendar says. When we meet, (not long hence, I trust), the time will seem short since

[1] See "List of the principal books relating to the Life and Works of Michelangelo. With notes by Charles Eliot Norton." *Bibliographical Contributions*, Library of Harvard University.

we last looked into each other's familiar eyes. We shall have changed together, and have grown only the nearer in spite of the differences of experience. Indeed ever since the fortunate day in 1850, when we met in Paris, each year has brought us closer. Our friendship has attained its majority. What a happy infancy, childhood and youth it has had! Without one fit of naughtiness, or one lamentable folly to reproach itself with! What a happy prospect for its mature years!

Yesterday was my forty-fourth birthday. I still feel at times wonderfully young, and sometimes, to be sure, to make the balance even, I feel wonderfully old. At these times nothing can be either younger or older than I. The contrast in the effect of Italy and Germany on one's feelings in respect to life is curious. In Italy one feels as if one had had experience, had known what it was to live, had learnt to know *something* if but very little, and could at least enjoy *much*. Here, on the contrary, one is convicted of inexperience and ignorance at every turn, everybody is hard at work learning and knows already a vast deal, and you are forced to begin to go to school again with the sense of having much lost time to make up for, and of the impropriety of enjoyment unless the pleasure is united with instruction. So *we* are all hard at work here, — and shall return home knowing a few words of German, and the simpler principles of the science of harmony. Dresden is a decorous and dry little city, — hurt since you saw it by that damaging wave of prosperity which has swept over the world during the last twenty years, and hurt, too, by having become, as the

advertisement in the Anzeiger says, the "residential abode" of a large colony of Americans, many of whom are of a sort whom one does not see at home, and does not wish to see abroad. . . .

Dresden is a tolerably good point of observation. It has become little more than a not very brilliant satellite of Berlin, but it retains a limited independence of movement, and certain tendencies of German public opinion become manifest here which would hardly be distinguishable in the central planetary city. It is a pity, but Berlin is acting upon Dresden and other small cities within its range much as New York acts on New Haven, Hartford, and Springfield. It takes its independence and individuality from it; forces it into inactiveness and provinciality, and ruins "society" by depriving it of an original, native flavour, and self-sufficing standard. Individuality of this sort is fast disappearing in Europe; there is no Weimar as in Goethe's time, no Bologna such as Stendhal describes, no Venice such as Beckford saw. The change has been rapid in the last twenty years. When we were first abroad there was more of the picturesqueness and variety of personal and national and municipal individuality than now. "Costume" has died out except in the remotest districts; dress has become uniform all over Europe, and not only the habit of the body but the apparel of the mind also has lost in variety, and character is, like coats, cut more and more upon one pattern. It is easy to see the reasons for this, and to speculate upon the possible good results of this increase of uniformity among men. Guizot in his last article on

the Duc de Broglie, (an extremely interesting paper,) speaks of the progress of men toward unity as the great advance made by society in our time. As yet, it seems to me that what has been attained is rather external uniformity than essential unity; and that if much good has been gained, much has also been lost. One would desire to look forward to the time, but it is so distant as to be out of range of vision, when all that is precious and delightful in the varieties of individual development should have a new growth out of the rich monotonous level of human unity.

But in Germany we no longer philosophize on such matters, and we trouble ourselves little concerning any questions but those of which the solution admits of immediate and practical application. The German has been surfeited with metaphysics and ontology till he has taken a disgust to them. Nothing that has not material value pleases him. Ideas he despises; facts are his treasure. The change in the spiritual temper of Germany is surprising, but one sees that it is to be accounted for in part as a natural reaction against the over-tension of the intellectual faculties in the attempt to solve the insoluble, and to make ropes out of sand, — and partly as the result of the splendid display of the virtues of fact, of practical training, of thorough positive drill, during the last war. Having led the world in the regions of abstractions, Germany now proposes to lead it in that of realities.

The only field where the metaphysical disposition seems to hold its own is that of music. Here, Wagner supports the old German reputation. He might be

called the Hegel of the Opera. His works are abstract enough to suit the most attenuated thinker. He does not believe in music that is not strictly intellectual. Passion as expressed in melody, — all the music of Italy, — is good perhaps for baby lovers like Romeo and Juliet, — but for grown men something deeper is needed, something in which the mind shall rise superior to the feelings, in which melody shall be suppressed, and intricate harmonies, puzzling to the most trained ear, shall instruct and elevate if not delight the soul. Controversy runs high among us on the subject. Our dearest Jane has become what is called here a "Wagnerianerinn," — not to be sure of the most pronounced kind for she allowed this morning that she did not regard Tannhäuser as perfectly beautiful, but only as perfectly interesting. . . .

Your last two letters, one to Jane and the other to me, have been deeply interesting, — and I wish you had time to write more frequently so as to keep us perfectly au courant with your political experiences and opinions. I should have been rejoiced had you been willing to take the Secretaryship which Grant would have been glad to offer you. I should have urged you to make the sacrifice, great as it was, that was required, — for what Grant needs, and what the country consequently suffers from his want of, is independent, sympathetic, intelligent, and trustworthy counsellors. I have not the least doubt that he means well enough, — but his political knowledge is very little, he is easily influenced by what one may call *second-class ideas* if skilfully put before him; and his

magnanimity, which was conspicuous during the war, degenerates into something not far from a vice in the peaceful regions of politics. Now could he have a friend and adviser such as you would be, a man in whose entire freedom from selfish motives he would have confidence, a man in whom he would trust, and whom he would soon learn to love, he would be saved from mistakes disastrous to his reputation, damaging to the country, and offensive to every right-thinking man. Sickles would not be minister in Spain; an honest effort would be made to reform the Civil Service; Murphy would not be Collector of New York; San Domingo would not have been pressed on the country; Butler would not have the credit of ever speaking in the name of the administration. I put these things helter-skelter, not in the order of their importance, — but when I think of these and the other bitter mistakes and sins that your presence in the Cabinet might have averted, of the probable mistakes in the future that it might avert, I cannot but grieve deeply that circumstances were such as to compel you to decline virtually the most important place in it. Is it impossible to reconsider your determination? Are the obstacles insurmountable? Affairs are serious enough at home to make it needful to make sacrifices that in easier times would not be demanded of us. These years are likely to be decisive, for good or for bad, of the direction in which the country is to proceed. The prospect seems to me dark; it would be far brighter were you in Washington as Grant's chief adviser. . . .

At Dresden, in February, 1872, a few days after the birth of his son Richard, Norton suffered the crushing blow of his wife's death. His mother and sisters, with whom close bonds of affection were strengthened by the intimacy of a sorrow shared, stood at hand to do whatever could be done to make the loss more endurable; and the necessity of supplying the place left vacant in the lives of his children brought a constant stimulus to exertion. Help also lay in a certain recognized attitude toward life, — a disciplined acceptance of the inevitable, a sense that such a loss might deepen the springs of endeavour. Partly through inheritance of a steadfast spirit, partly by conscious effort, the will obeyed the need.

"It is the next thing to being happy to have been happy," wrote Norton to Curtis after six weeks of attempted readjustment. And to his brother-in-law, William Bullard, Norton wrote on March 5: "I wish it were in my power to save you and Louisa from the sorrow you must feel for me. But you must think of me always as feeling through and through my heart that I have been blessed with a blessing that endures . . . and consequently able to find help in the days."

The lease of Shady Hill, in Cambridge, had still more than a year to run, and the stay in Europe must needs continue as best it could.

In Norton's notebook of this year is the brief entry, "Thursday, April 11, 1872. Left Dresden." On the next page are these lines, —

"Days, that in spite
Of darkness, by the light
Of a clear mind are day all night.

Life, that dares send
A challenge to his end;
And when it comes, say, 'Welcome friend.'"

Spring and the early summer were spent in Paris and at St.-Germain; but on the way thither, the Nortons stopped in Halle, to see Karl Witte.[1] "I wanted to pay my respects to so good a scholar," Norton says in his notebook; — and continues: "A vigorous, animated old man of 72, white hair, dark eyes, with silver spectacles on a *naso maschio*, a pleasant expression and with a manner curiously compounded of the scholar, the professor, and the man who had seen and loved Italy. We talked together in Italian. He took me almost at once . . . to see his Dantesque books. The day was exquisite. . . . It was pleasant to hear birds sing, and to walk through the streets of the quiet old city with the old professor discoursing of his lifelong studies."

Arrived in Paris, Norton wrote in his journal for May 19, 1872: "Mackay[2] and I went to see Renan. He lives *au quatrième* in a quiet house in the Rue de Varennes. We rang at his door, and it was opened by himself. He made his excuses: no one but himself at home, it was the maid's holiday, and his wife was spending the day in the country. He took us at once into his study, . . . The books had a modern look, — most of them were octavos in paper covers, . . . there were few folios, . . . very little apparent of the appar-

[1] Karl Witte (1800–1883), one of the most eminent German Dante scholars.

[2] Lord Reay. See ante, page 320.

atus of a scholar. On the table lay open the recent Ordnance Survey Map of Jerusalem and one of Palestine. The absence of the appearance of scholarly books gave me a strong sense of the worth of the Bibliothèque Nationale and the Bibliothèque Mazarine to a poor scholar. To be sure, Renan can do better without books than some students, — the rhetorician is stronger in him than the scholar. . . . He impressed me as talking more for effect than for truth, as wanting in simplicity and sincerity. He talked well, however, that is, brilliantly and fluently, and he plainly liked to talk.

"M. Renan asked me if he could do anything for me in Paris, and on my telling him that I had wished to see Littré, offered to give me a note of introduction to him. He was apparently amused at my caring to know Littré, of whom, in the course of talk, he had spoken in a patronizing way, which had in turn given me some quiet amusement. He had called him 'bon enfant' and referred to his sacrifices in the support of Comte, when he, Littré, was a young man struggling hard to keep the wolf from his own door, as rather an absurd piece of conduct. He seemed to regard Littré as too naïf, too simple, too 'philosophe' for Paris. It entertained me, after this to find the note he gave me beginning, — 'Cher confrère et maître."

"Some time after, one Sunday afternoon, I went to see Littré. . . . I was shown in through a very small anteroom, . . . to a room no larger, in which I found Littré . . . There was scarcely space for a visitor. Littré was seated at a study-table cumbered with papers

and books, revising a proof-sheet. . . . [He] spoke of France in the tone of a man who had little hope for the present, but who was confident of the gradual progress of mankind."

Some days after this visit Norton was asked "to take charge of 1000 francs, a portion of the Boston French Relief Fund raised [in the previous year] for the relief of poor sufferers from the Prussian invasion and the siege of Paris. This money was to be given away in Paris, and I thought" — Norton writes in his journal — "that if Littré would take charge of its distribution there could be no question of its being wisely applied, — for his life has been one of benevolence and service of the poor. I accordingly went to see him one morning. . . . He readily undertook the commission; and again in talking with him I was greatly impressed with his simplicity, his manliness, and the sweet expression of his plain face.[1]"

In a fuller account of this intercourse with Littré, who was at this time seventy-one years old, Norton says: "It was not his intelligence and his learning that were the best of him; they were but the subordinate expressions of a strong and original character, and of a nature of rare simplicity, modesty, disinterestedness and elevation. His severe intelligence rested on a moral foundation. . . . He was as industrious and as learned as a Benedictine, but he did not withdraw himself from the world; he was a good citizen as well as good scholar; and his intellectual zeal had its chief source in his social

[1] As a rule Norton did not care for photographic likenesses, — did not want them about, — but in his library at Shady Hill were four: one of Darwin, one of Carlyle, one of Littré, one of Burne-Jones.

sympathies. . . . A fine verse of Lucretius, which he himself cites as appropriate to his master Comte, may be applied with equal fitness to himself as one who habitually dwelt in the

"*Edita doctrina sapientum templa serena.*"

In the autumn the Nortons — young and old — were once more established in a house in London, where friends were waiting to make the winter pass as little sadly as such a time might. In Norton's journal of this winter there is nothing of self-pity, though the shadow in which he was walking is sometimes seen upon its pages. Through its fully detailed record of his intercourse with friends, and of his constant, loving concern for his children and their interests, the activities that filled the months before the return to America may be closely followed.

CHAPTER VIII

A WINTER IN LONDON

(1872–1873)

CARLYLE wrote in his notebook on March 1, 1873: "An amiable, very friendly, sincere and cultivated Charles Norton, from Boston, is here all winter and much a favourite with me." In a letter to Curtis, December 27, 1872, Norton wrote: "I think the chief pleasure of my stay in London this year has been the frequent walks and talks I have had with Carlyle. I see him often enough to have grown familiar in some sort with him, and sincerely attached to him. He is, though seventy-seven years old, in excellent health, and vigorous for his years. Age has tempered whatever once may have been hard in him, and yet has taken from him nothing of keenness of intelligence or richness of humour and imagination. . . . He is the most striking figure in London, — and when he dies there will be a bigger gap than the death of any other man could make."

Norton's journal of this period is full of the "walks and talks" with Carlyle which he enjoyed so much; but it abounds in references to other friends, and, supplemented by some of the letters, especially those to Lowell, written during the last months away from home, provides a picture — in which even details stand out — of a memorable winter.

Some ten years later, Lowell, writing from England

to Norton, said, "I like London and have learned to see as I never saw before the advantage of a great capital. It establishes one set of weights and measures, moral and intellectual, for a whole country." Norton had earlier recognized the "set of weights and measures" established by London, and when he returned there in 1872 it was to the accepted and understood: this in itself brought about those immediate adjustments which lent ease to the growth of friendship.

To J. R. Lowell

33 CLEVELAND SQUARE, W., October 20, 1872.

It was very pleasant to hear from you and to know that you were getting on well in the Rue de Beaune (What a pleasant flavour the name has!) and becoming wonted to your new quarters. If you go on as you have begun, your French will, by the end of the winter, be at least as good as my English. I am glad that you are still writing poetry in English. I want very much to see the new poem, for I fear if you delay long to put it upon paper, it will turn to *chanson*, or *roman* or *ballade*, in your head, and I shall have to borrow a Roquefort to translate it.

I have done little work since getting here, and have not read a word of old French. There is much to do in merely settling one's-self, and *orienter*-ing one's-self in such a vast sunless city as this. And I have had letters to write, and arrangements to make for the other children's lessons and Eliot's school, and some few friends to see, and the week has gone since I last wrote mainly in petty and not memorable

ways. One afternoon I went to see my kind old friend Forster, (John, I mean, not William,) who is ill, and in his room met Carlyle. He was very cordial and very entertaining. His vein of humorous reminiscence ran as freely as ever, and he told a comic story of Sumner whom he dislikes as heartily as if he had been born on Beacon Street. He defined him as "the most completely nothin' of a mon that ever crossed my threshold, — naught whatsoever in him or of him but wind and vanity"; and Forster capped his story with a queer reminiscence of Sumner, at the time of his first visit to England, apologizing for Slavery at a breakfast in Lincoln's Inn. I had a walk with Carlyle afterwards, and he spoke of himself in answer to my question, as very well, "perfectly healthy in every function and organ, but for the tremblin' o' me hand which hinders writin', so that now-a-days many reflections are born in me that will never find utterance. But I'm a verra old man, and for seven years now I've been sorely burdened, and I often think that the best thing that could befall me wad be to be taken from this lonesome valley." — I hope to see more of him.

One day Harry James [1] and Grace and I went to see

[1] Henry James, then in London, was much with the Nortons at this time. In Norton's journal of the winter, there are some entertaining pages in the young novelist's own hand, giving an account of an expedition with the Nortons "on the 12th of March," [when] "we went by appointment with Mr. Morris to see his glasswork and tapestries and the other treasures of his shop. . . . Mr. Morris's dwelling sits side by side with his shop or *fabrique*, under the same roof, in Queen's Square, Bloomsbury, a remote, unfashionable quarter of the town, smelling strongly of the last century — a parallelogram of dingy respectable houses, with a narrow enclosure in the middle, containing a hoary effigy of Queen Anne."

the pictures at Bethnal Green.[1] I cared much for Gainsborough's little Miss Boothby with the whole moral history of English woman in her sweet prim little face and quaint nice dress; and for delightful Nelly O'Brien, whom I should have liked to paint as often, could I have done her as well, as Sir Joshua did; . . . But I was in no humour for looking at such pictures after the drive through the East End, — which has long been to me the most appalling place on earth.

To J. R. Lowell

33 CLEVELAND SQUARE, W., November 3, 1872.

I was very glad to get your note yesterday morning and to hear that the days were going pleasantly with you. All continues well with us. Since I last wrote to you my life has been very quiet. I have seen few people outside of our own household. Rowse and Wright were with us almost every day while they were in London. They were both in excellent condition. . . .

One day last week I met Carlyle and Allingham,[2] (who is reported to be his Boswell,) and had a long walk with them, from Brompton, through the Park to Belgravia. Carlyle was in a pleasant humour, but with less head of talk on than usual. The chief subject of his objurgation was Herbert Spencer, and, in general, the men who, as Goethe said, waste their lives *gedenkend* concerning *Gedenken*. . . .

[1] Where the National Portrait Gallery was then established.

[2] William Allingham (1824–1889) whose *Diary and Reminiscences* contribute to the knowledge of Carlyle and his contemporaries.

Journal

OXFORD, Saturday, November 10, 1872.

Ruskin was never in a sweeter, less irrational mood than during these days. His reliance on me, his affection for me touch me deeply. Spent the morning again among his collections, — getting many suggestions for work in this field at home. After lunch with him went to his lecture, a much more instructive and interesting one than the last. It was on the characteristics of the great Italian schools of art, as preparatory to the study of Engraving. . . .

At four I left Oxford, Ruskin with me till the last moment, and most devoted. "I wonder," he said, "why I always feel as if you were so much older than I, and so much wiser." "Good-bye, *papa*," were his last words, "be sure to take care of yourself." . . .

LONDON, November 11, 1872.

After a morning, occupied with Sally's and Lily's lessons, and letter-writing, went to lunch with the Burne-Joneses. . . . Then went to see Emerson. He has grown but little older in these four years, and seemed fresh and vigorous, quite recovered from the shock of the burning of his house. His face was full of tender and mild expression. He and his daughter would come to dine with us this evening. I drove to Carlyle's to ask him to come also, but he was out.

In the evening Emerson talked admirably, with great discrimination, of Carlyle. I read him something of Omar Khayyám, of whom previously he had known

nothing. He objected to his want of affirmation, — the sign of a truly healthy and vigorous soul; but was impressed by his incisive skepticism.

The facts concerning Norton's first knowledge of Omar Khayyám [1] and its translator (confused by some inaccurate published statements) are made clear by the following letter which, in spite of its belonging to a later year, is inserted here.[2]

To Lady Burne-Jones

SHADY HILL, 22 May, 1902.

DEAREST GEORGIE, — You will remember that it was in the late autumn of 1868 or the winter of 1869 when you first showed me the quatrains of Omar Khayyám, and that at that time you knew nothing concerning the translator. You told me then of the letter which Ruskin had left with you to be sent to him, if at any time you should discover his name. When I came back to England in 1872 and spoke with you again of the Quatrains, you told me that you had heard that the translator was a certain Rev. Edward FitzGerald, who lived somewhere in Norfolk and was fond of boating. But this was all.

One day in the Spring of 1873, when I was walking

[1] In October, 1869, Norton, in a long article in the *North American Review*, brought to the attention of the American public Omar Khayyám in the French version of Nicolas and the anonymous translation of FitzGerald. He recognized FitzGerald's achievement in these words: "It is the work of a poet inspired by a poet; not a copy, but a reproduction; not a translation, but a redelivery of a poetic inspiration."

[2] A portion of this letter was published in *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones*, 1904.

with Carlyle, I spoke to him of the little book, expressing my admiration for it. He had never heard of it. He asked me whose work it was, and I told him what I had heard, that the translation was made by a Rev. Edward FitzGerald, who lived somewhere in Norfolk and spent much time in his boat. "The Reverend Edward Fitzgerald?" said he in reply. "Why, he's no more Reverend than I am! He's a very old friend of mine, . . . I'm surprised, if the book be as good as you tell me it is, that my old friend has never mentioned it to me"; and then he went on to give me a further account of FitzGerald. I told him I would send him the book, and did so the next day. Two or three days later, when we were walking together again, he said: "I've read that little book which you sent to me, and I think my old friend FitzGerald might have spent his time to much better purpose than in busying himself with the verses of that old Mohammedan blackguard." I could not prevail on Carlyle even to do credit to the noble English in which FitzGerald had rendered the audacious quatrains of the Persian poet; he held the whole thing as worse than a mere waste of labour.

The next day I was laid up with so heavy a cold that I could not get out of doors, and I wrote to you what Carlyle had told me. You sent me Ruskin's letter, asking me to get it to FitzGerald, and I enclosed it to Carlyle in a note in which I said that if he did not object to giving FitzGerald pleasure, on the score of his translation of the verses of the "old Mohammedan blackguard," you would be much obliged to

him if he would put the right address upon the letter and forward it to the translator.

A day or two afterwards I received a pleasant note from FitzGerald himself, saying that Carlyle had enclosed my note to him, so that he had learned that it was through my intervention that the letter of Ruskin had at last come to him. I was amused that Carlyle had let his phrase about the "old Mohammedan blackguard" reach FitzGerald's eyes. That note was the beginning of a delightful epistolary acquaintance. I might indeed more justly call it an epistolary friendship, which was drawn close during the ten years from the beginning till FitzGerald's death.

This, dearest Georgie, will give you all the data you want. . . . With love from us all, I am, as always,

Gratefully and affectionately yours,

C. E. N.

Journal

Tuesday, November 12, 1872.

Took Emerson to see Burne-Jones[1] and his pictures. The richness and beauty of poetic fancy in the pictures, the simplicity, sweetness, and wide cultivation of Burne-Jones, struck him with surprise. He had no thought that there was so complete an artist in England. We stayed to lunch; talk of Raphael and Michel Angelo, of the Greek tragedians, of the impersonal quality of the highest genius as a rule; Dante the great exception; Goethe on a lower plane; Shakespeare and

[1] Writing in after years to Sir John Simon, Norton said, "The Grange was quite the most enchanted ground in London. I wish it might remain so forever in reality as it will in my imagination."

Homer the supreme men. Emerson can take no satisfaction in Aristophanes as he finds him translated; not even Frere's translations amuse him. . . .

To J. R. Lowell

33 CLEVELAND SQUARE, W., November 13, 1872.

. . . I have been long in answering your last letter, but the days have been full of occupation. Your letters always make a good day for me. With you I am more at home than with anyone in the world outside of my own household, and I like to know of you and to have you know of me. . . .

All goes well with us here. I count the days till we are on our way home, and am glad as each one passes. I want to be at home. I shall not be on even terms with life till I am at home once more, and have faced the change. The best of life lies behind me, and I find it hard sometimes to look forward to the unending second best. I turn more and more to the past.

Last week I went to Oxford to spend two or three days with Ruskin, and to hear two of his lectures. I have never seen him sweeter or finer in temper and heart. He has one of the tenderest natures with which man was ever blessed; but the world and the conditions of his life are not fitted to make him happy, or to help him to make the best of himself before the public. At Oxford he is doing such service as only a man of genius can do, and with that a man of most generous and liberal disposition. When you come back to England you must not fail to give a day to seeing the collections he has given to Oxford as the foundation of the Draw-

ing School of the University. There is no collection elsewhere of equal worth for the purposes of instruction in Art.

I returned to town on Saturday, — to find Emerson in your old lodgings. He and his daughter dined with us on Monday, and it was a great pleasure to me to see him so fresh, and strong, and unchanged. He was looking forward with satisfaction to finding you in Paris, and I hope you will be able to get rooms for him in your little Hotel. I took him yesterday to see Burne-Jones's pictures of which he will tell you. . . .

Journal

Saturday, November 16, 1872.

My birthday.

The children gave me pretty little presents, and their unconsciousness of my loss and theirs almost breaks me down. Ruskin sent me a slight but interesting and beautiful sketch by Turner, which pleases me because Sue saw it, four years ago, and liked it. . . .

London, Sunday, November 17, 1872.

In the afternoon a walk with Carlyle and Fitzjames Stephen. Allingham joined us for a time. . . . Since I last saw Stephen he has had his two or three successful years in India, where, by all accounts, he has done excellent work as Maine's successor. The experience has been of service in giving him breadth. He is an excellent specimen of the men to whom England chiefly owes her greatness, — men of solid, sincere intelligence, of vast capacity for work, of large frame and brain,

eminently healthy, four-square, and even with the world.

I expressed my wish that we could burn, instead of burying our dead[1]; a wish in which both Carlyle and Stephen agreed, — but regarded the difficulties of introducing the change as at present insurmountable. Carlyle was very earnest in his declamation against our funeral as well as our burial customs. "It is some satisfaction to learn that now and then a clergyman goes mad from having to repeat over and over again the funeral service. . . ."

Thursday, November 21, 1872.

Went to Oxford to be with Ruskin. His lecture to-day on wood engraving and Bewick, — very good. I use whatever power I have with him to keep him strictly and busily at his work. In the field of Art he has the genius which makes him a master; in all other fields he has need of putting himself to school. He is surely the least consistent and most irrational of sane men; but he has the tenderest heart and the most generous sympathies. He spoke the secret of the ruin of his life to-day, when he said to me, "I can't remember that I ever did anything in my life except from the moment's impulse."

I took a walk by myself in the afternoon, but the weather was raw and damp, and my heart chilly and autumnal.

In the evening we looked at some magnificent drawings by Turner (Lake of Constance, Vesuvius, etc.), at

[1] What Norton so strongly believed in was done in his own case.

some Holbein cuts, and at a lovely sketch of a girl by Gainsborough, perfectly cheerful, sunny, sweet, and English, which Burgess bought the other day for three pounds, and for which Ruskin has given him three hundred.

Friday, November 22, 1872; Oxford.

Spent the morning at the Bodleian, looking up some mss. of the Vita Nuova and other works of Dante, for old Witte, from whom I received yesterday a very kind and pleasant letter.

Lunched with Ruskin, and in the afternoon returned to town, in order to be at home to receive a visit from Morley on the next morning. Found all well and the children very happy. . . .

Finished the second volume of the "Life of Dickens" which Forster sent me a week ago. It must be read with sympathy; on the whole Forster has done his hard task well. But there is too much about Dickens, — "about him and about," and too little *of* him. The character is lost in the detail. This was true, in a sort, of Dickens himself, whose restless vitality and easily moved sympathies made each minute so important and so interesting, or at least entertaining, that his life was a discontinuous series of emotions and effects, much less than a consistent foreseen and foreseeing evolution of character. Forster's plan in writing the book, and the prominence into which it forces himself may be criticized and condemned; but the sincerity with which he has written, and the truth and loyalty of his devotion to Dickens

are beyond praise. Dickens would, I think, have approved the book.

LONDON, Saturday, November 23, 1872.

A long and interesting visit from Morley [1] occupied the morning. Much talk on the deepest matters of concern. In belief and opinion I agree with him more nearly than with most men. He is eminently sincere, and clear-minded, and has nothing of the narrow hard-and-fastness of the professed Comtists. He is altogether a worthy disciple of Mill.

Religion, Utilitarianism, the modern view of Morals, political opinion in England, and the United States, were some of the subjects on which we talked. To record such talk is difficult, perhaps not worth while, but it is not without effect in carrying forward and defining one's own thought.

Sunday, December 1, 1872.

Spent the morning with the children, and in letter-writing.

In the afternoon went to see Frederic Harrison, from whom I missed a visit the other day. He was most happily married not long after we left London in 1869. His wife is a pleasing and intelligent woman. He is the most vigorous and able of the Comtist radicals, and if he lives can hardly fail to make a deep mark on modes of thought, if not of action, in England, in regard to social and political questions. There is a rare combination in him of strong feeling with strong sense. He

[1] John Morley was then editing the *Fortnightly Review*.

speaks of the marked progress of liberal sentiments in England both in matters of religion and in politics, within late years; confirming my own observations. . . .

Monday, December 2, 1872.

Carried to Carlyle a copy of Wollaston's book on the "Religion of Nature," which Franklin in his "Autobiography" says he worked at, as compositor, in London. Then had a long walk with Carlyle. . . . Carlyle spoke warmly of the pleasure he had had in reading the lately published "Memorials of a Quiet Life," — records of the Hare family, many of whom he had known, — "a verra true and delightful picture of all that is best in our poor old Church o' England, that's become so decrepid o' late, and is hastenin' towards its much to be desired end, — a verra sweet picture o' piety and purity with not much o' priggishness. The story of poor Hare's death did what I had thought might never be done again, made tears flow of which the fount has long been dry."

After a while we got talking of the French and their literature, of Baudelaire, and Victor Hugo, "A man o' genius, but of the genius of the bottomless pit. So sure as the Lord liveth, as the prophets used to affirm, and as I too in a sort can affirm, such work as his proceeds from the Devil and leads straight to the mouth of Hell.

"A German once told me that in his youth when he was sent from his little village to the market town to make purchases, maybe once or twice a year, the advice to him was — 'If you can find English-made goods, buy them; they cost a little more, but they last

longer,' but that now the advice would be, 'Don't buy English goods, they cost a little less, but there's no worth in them.' And this advice was right each time. England is filling the world with shoddy. There's great talk about the wrongs o' the workmen, but the very first and chiefest o' their wrongs is *quack* work." . . .

[Carlyle referred to] Spedding, and his labours about Lord Bacon: "I tried to dissuade him from giving his life to the work, but all in vain. Bacon is by no means one of the pillars o' the universe. I read him thoroughly when I was a young man, quite persuaded of his greatness, but when after a while I was able coolly to ask myself what I had really got from him I found it was nothin' substantial, some fine rhetorical or well-soundin' sentences of verra moderate wisdom was about the sum of me obligations." . . .

Drawing upon his notebook for "Recollections of Carlyle," Norton wrote in the "New Princeton Review" of July 1886: —

"He talked but little of his immediately personal affairs; there was no touch of vanity or self-engrossment in his narratives. He had no conceit about his works, and never put on the air of a prophet, or of a man deserving of superior consideration.

"One day the talk fell upon his books. 'Poor old "Sartor"!' he said. 'It's a book in which I take little satisfaction; really a book worth very little as a work of art, a fragmentary, disjointed, vehement production. It was written when I was livin' at Craigenputtock, one o' the solitariest places on the face o' the earth; a

wild moor-land place where one might lead a wholesome, simple life, and might labour without interruption, and be not altogether without peace such as London cannot give. We were quite alone, and there is much that is beautiful and precious in them as I look back on those days.' He went on to tell of the difficulties he had in getting the book published, of which an account has since been given in his 'Life,' and of the lack of favour with which it was at first received, and then he said, 'But it's been so with all my books. I've had little satisfaction or encouragement in the doin' of them, and the most satisfaction I can get out of them now is the sense of havin' shouldered a heavy burden o' work, an' not flinched under it. I've had but one thing to say from beginnin' to end o' them, and that was, that there's no other reliance for this world or any other but just the Truth, and that if men did not want to be damned to all eternity, they had best give up lyin', and all kinds o' falsehood; that the world was far gone already through lyin', and that there's no hope for it save just so far as men find out and believe the Truth, and match their lives to it. But on the whole the world has gone on lyin' worse than ever! (A laugh.) It's not a very pleasin' retrospect,—those books o' mine,—of a long life; a beggarly account of empty boxes.'"

Journal

Wednesday, December 4, 1872.

Went with Leslie Stephen, taking Eliot with us, to the Zoological Gardens, where the Sea Lion with her

old French keeper, and a wonderfully human Chimpanzee interested me much.

Struck as usual with Stephen's intellectual sincerity, and liberality, and with that temper of indifference to one's own influence, a certain inertness, which, I fancy, is common to men of delicate and fastidious sensibilities and of philosophic disposition, who find themselves in creed and in motive out of harmony with their generation. The strongest immediate incitement to effort at expression is taken from them.

Thursday, December 5, 1872.

Went with Burne-Jones to Oxford. Much and interesting talk with him on the way, of himself, of Rossetti, of Ruskin, of Morris. . . . Rossetti is better, at Kelmscott [1], but his life is very much of a wreck.

Ruskin was pleased to see Ned,[2] and we had a good hour's talk, and then went to the lecture, the best I have heard, mainly on Holbein and Botticelli, and the difference in the characteristics of the Northern and the Italian genius.

Ned, to my regret, had to return the same night to town. I stayed, and we spent the evening in looking over the Turner drawings. It is pleasant to admire them more and more, and I find them more wonderful and more unparallelled than ever.

The next morning and the next I spent in the Bodleian, whose alcoves are among the pleasantest places for study in the world. I was busy over some old Venetian manuscripts, legends of Venetian Saints;

[1] Kelmscott Manor, Morris's home.

[2] Edward Burne-Jones.

and in trying to find out about the form and maker of Dante's font in mio bel San Giovanni.

I spent an hour or two also in the Gallery, studying the Turners there, and finding pleasure in Sir Joshua's fine portrait of James Paine and his Son, which is not, like many of Sir Joshua's in their actual state, almost as good in the engraving as in the original, — and in the vigorous and elaborate sketch (or reduced copy?) of Paolo's Christ in the House of Levi. The rest of the days I was with Ruskin, and we had much talk over his work and plans. He needs a helpful and sympathetic friend. He is too much alone. On Friday we dined in Hall with a pleasant set of Fellows of Corpus, so young that they made me feel very old. After dinner a lively discussion on University Reform.

After hearing Ruskin's lecture on Saturday, the closing one for this term, I came back to London, — and found the children all well.

Monday, December 9, 1872.

After a morning of Sally's lessons, and of writing, went to see Carlyle. He was alone in his study, he took his long pipe, drew his chair up to the fire and began to talk in his pleasantest vein, going on from one reminiscence to another of his childhood; of life in Dumfriesshire in his early years; of his father and grandfather; how the latter saw the Young Pretender's army in '45, and of his adventures with it. "There were few books among the farmers in those days, but somehow when my grandfather was well on in years a stray copy of Anson's 'Voyages' drifted into his hands, and a friend

of his would come over in the evenin' and the two old men wad read the book aloud to each other. And after that there came the 'Arabian Nights' (which has given me more pleasure in my lifetime than any other), and night after night the old men sat readin' it, and one night my father who had listened to some o' their readin' felt called upon to utter his protest, and he said, 'It made him wonder to see two old men who had a great respect for truth amusin' themselves with what was a mere collection o' improbabilities an' falsehoods; he had listened for several nights without hearing a single word of fact, that it was all a confusion of every sort o' nonsense and untruth.' And so he lifted up his voice against it, not at all out of any want o' respect, for he was a verra pious and dutiful son, but simply because he could not conceive o' anything but harm comin' from such plain disregard of actual realities, — but ye may believe he was never again permitted to take part in those delightful readings.

"Na, my father was not what you call a cheerful man, but he was far from morose; he was very serious, not smilin' much, and as for his laugh, perhaps ye might hear it as often as once in three or four years, but then it was a laugh that filled the long silence. A solitary life he had, of much mute contemplation, and I never knew a greater natural faculty."

As the early twilight came on Carlyle proposed a walk, and we went as usual through Brompton to the Park. After sunset the moon came out bright from behind the low bank of London cloud.

The talk naturally ran along in the same channels of

reminiscence, with occasional diversions to more recent interests. Among the latter, Carlyle told me that he had known Edward FitzGerald well, though he had not heard of his translation of Omar Khayyám till I mentioned it to him. "A modest, shy, studious man, of much character, much loved by Thackeray and others. I used to see him often, but he never said to me anything of this book of his that you think so well of. The Battle o' Naseby was fought on ground that belongs to his father, and a famous monument was erected with a very abundant inscription to point out the site of it; but years ago Dr. Arnold [1] and I went down to study the locality, but we could make nothin' of it with all the help we could get from plans and narratives. And then Edward FitzGerald took to investigatin' the matter, and at length, some mile or two away from the monument, he found a ridge that he opened, and there lay the bones of the dead, just as they'd been buried near the field where they fell, — not two hundred, I think, in all, killed in that battle that decided the fate of King and England, and broke Prince Rupert and the Cavaliers. And then having found so much, he was able to make out the exact field o' battle, and he and I have been arrangin' to put a stone there, o' the Cyclopean sort, a mere block of hewn granite, with as little writin' as possible on it, to mark the spot, — memorable to all England even to this day."

We parted at the corner of Piccadilly; Carlyle to take

[1] A letter of Carlyle's about his visit to Naseby with Dr. Thomas Arnold of Rugby is to be found in Froude's *Carlyle*, vol. i, 254. See also *Letters of Edward FitzGerald*, edited by W. Aldis Wright.

an omnibus to Chelsea, I a walk home by bright moonlight across the Park. Among other things he had given me an account of "poor little Allingham's" life and struggles.

LONDON, Wednesday, December 11, 1872.

Went with my old college friend Henry Chauncey [1] to see Cesnola's collection of antiquities from Cyprus, which has been bought for the New York Museum of Fine Arts, and is soon to be sent to America. A great part of it is indeed already packed. It is an extraordinary and interesting collection, of great value in the illustration it affords of both ancient history and art, and as supplying the link that has been wanting between the art of Egypt and Asia Minor and that of Greece. It comes mainly from the temple at Golgos, a famous shrine, according to Herodotus, in the days of the Trojan War.

General Cesnola was superintending the packing, a good specimen of the Italian Americanized; a man with a real preference of reputation to money, of great energy, and of a cheerful disposition. Dr. Birch [1] and Mr. Newton [2] of the British Museum are tearing their hair, at having allowed the collection to slip through their fingers. They had no idea of American competition. And Mr. Gladstone sheds tears that such precious illustrations of Homer should leave English shores. And it is, indeed, almost a pity that it should

[1] Graduated at Harvard, 1844, two years before Norton.

[2] Samuel Birch, keeper of Oriental antiquities at the British Museum.

[3] (Sir) Charles Thomas Newton, keeper of Greek and Roman antiquities at the British Museum.

go to America, where it can not, for a long time, be of as much service as it would be here. It is an admirable foundation, however, for a great collection of works of ancient art; and if the Communists again get the upper hand in Paris and hold it, we may be able to buy out the Louvre!

Friday, December 13, 1872.

Ruskin and Carlyle came to lunch with us, — both in their sweetest and best moods. Their talk was extremely characteristic, and full of interest. I am struck more and more with the depth of Carlyle's sympathies, and the delicacy and keenness of his sensibility. The essential quality of his talk and Ruskin's alike is not so much in the words of it as in the manner and expression. If repeated, — if even reported word for word, — it is likely to produce a different effect from that which it made when first spoken, owing to the loss of the incommunicable look, the evanescent air, the qualifying and inimitable tone. Each was delightful with the other, and each so perfectly at ease, so entirely free from self-consciousness of any disagreeable sort, so devoid of arrogance or disposition to produce false effect, each also was so full of humour and of thought, that the talk was of the best ever heard. It ran on Frederick Barbarossa, Walt Whitman, the penalties of life in London, shopping and its horrors, Rousseau, old wives in Scotland, magazines, Pedro Garcia, Don Quixote, "a book," said Carlyle, "I hold among the very best ever written, the one book that Spain has produced." "Yes," said Ruskin, "as you

think of but one author in Spain, so for me there is but one painter."

After lunch we had a Punch and Judy show before my study windows. I had engaged it for Ruskin's sake, for he is fond of it and of seeing the children's amusement at the performance. Carlyle smoked a pipe by the fireside, — and after Punch went off, we had more talk, and at sunset Ruskin took Carlyle home in his carriage.

Carlyle brought me a copy of "Sartor Resartus."

Writing a few days later about this luncheon party, with its Punch and Judy finale for the benefit of Ruskin, Norton said of Carlyle: —

"Nothing could have been sweeter than his ways with the children, — it was the sweetness of a real sympathy for them. Sally was standing by the door as he went away, looking very bright and pretty, and he said, 'Tell me your name, little dear, once more,' and then he kissed her, and said in the tenderest way, 'Poor little woman! dear little woman. May all good be yours.' I don't think she will forget him. . . .

"Carlyle and Ruskin were with us for more than two hours, and the talk was characteristic and interesting. . . . It would be rare to find two such masters in expression so entirely simple, unpretending, undemanding, and so completely at ease, brightening the most serious topics with the liveliest humour, and taking the most genial pleasure in each other's company. . . .

"'How can Ruskin [said Carlyle one day] justify his

devotion to Art? Art does nothin' in these days, and is good for nothin'; and of all topics of human concern there's not one in which there's more hypocrisy and vain speakin'. . . . The pictures in our days have seldom any scrap of help or meanin' for any human soul, — mere products of emptiness and idleness, works o' the devil some o' them, but most o' them rather deservin' to be consigned without delay to the *limbo dei bambini.*'

"'T is easy to find fault with Ruskin for his petulance and unreason and such other sins as they charge on him; but he's very much to be excused, and there's little or nothing in him that needs to be forgiven."[1]

Journal

Friday, December 20, 1872.

Had some talk at the Athenæum with Shaw-Lefevre, and Mat Arnold. — Poor fellow, he has suffered much, of late, from the loss of children, and looks troubled and worn. His wife is broken by calamity, and they propose to spend this winter (he having got a long vacation) in Italy. I afterwards went to the Deanery at Westminster, and saw the Dean and Lady Augusta.[2] The Dean was very pleasant as usual, and in excellent spirits regarding the commotion about him at Oxford last week. No trouble of the sort, he said, could have brought him less annoyance and more satisfaction.

[1] See "Recollections of Carlyle," by C. E. Norton, *New Princeton Review*, July, 1886.

[2] It will be remembered that as a young man in Paris, Norton had seen Lady Augusta Bruce frequently. The acquaintance had been renewed in 1868, when Lady Augusta had for five years been the wife of Dean Stanley.

The hearty support of the old men, of such men as Dr. Lushington and Dr. Hawkins (Provost of Oriel), was even more touching and gratifying than that of the young men.[1] From the Deanery I went into the Abbey where there was a service on behalf of the Missions of the Church of England, — one of numerous services of the same sort held throughout the country. A service in the Abbey is always striking, — especially when the church is lighted by candles and gas, as it was this afternoon. The architecture and the associations of the building combine to render the service impressive. There was a large and most attentive congregation. The forms and the words of the service seemed to me more than ever irrational and superstitious. There was an incongruity that amounted almost to unspoken wit, and was certainly humorous, between the intent of the assemblage of the people, who were gathered to worship there, and to intercede for the conversion of the Heathen, and the words of their prayers, — and the thought of an enlightened Heathen, a Marcus Aurelius or a Confucius. The Dean's sermon was liberal, and, considering his position, bold. At every sentence one could feel the clank of the chain of the church, — which the Dean was not unconscious of. As a literary performance the sermon was very good, and as a moral performance excellent, but there was running through it a vein of sentimentalism which is one of the sources of the Dean's popularity as a

[1] In December of 1872 there was an effort to remove Dean Stanley's name from the list of university preachers at Oxford. Dr. Lushington, dean of arches, ninety-one years old, travelled from London to Oxford to cast his vote for Stanley's retention.

preacher, and there was a certain shallowness in it which fitted it to the comprehension of a common audience. It was not a cry *de profundis*.

And the Heathenism of London was surging and beating at the doors of the great Abbey; — and the black tide of the Thames running by; — and London Christianity, like that of Rome and Paris, seems as outworn a creed as any other.

Sunday, December 22, 1872.

Lunched with Jane at Mr. Erasmus Darwin's. Mr. and Mrs. Charles Darwin were there, but Mr. Darwin was too unwell to be seen. Mr. and Mrs. Hensleigh Wedgwood were with us at lunch. Went thence to see the Lyells. He is becoming more and more infirm, but was very animated and talkative. I said that I had been reminded in hearing Stanley on Friday of the fable of the Wolf and the Dog, — I saw the mark of the collar. "That reminds me," said Sir Charles, "of Maurice's saying, that he felt perfectly at liberty *within* the limits of the 39 articles."

Tuesday, December 24, 1872.

Lunched with the Burne-Joneses. Morris also there. He is just moving into his new house at Hammersmith. Ned has finished his picture of "Love in the Ruins." ... He is more completely inspired with the Spirit of painting than any man I have known. His studio is much like what Botticelli's or Signorelli's workshop must have been. Morris and he walked towards home with me talking of Norse stories.

Grace and I dined with Frederic Harrison and his wife, — a pleasant *partie carrée*, — for he is a man of uncommon energy and independence of thought. A Comtist, but not yet to the point of completely accepting the Religion of Humanity. I found myself much in agreement with him. Speaking of the "Arabian Nights" he said he had never read them, only of late years had looked at them to find out what they were. I asked him if he ever dreamed; he said No, that he could not recollect ever having a dream. Then I told him of Coleridge's saying to the man who announced that he had never read the "Arabian Nights"; and of the confirmation that Agassiz gave to it.

He, like most of the English Comtists, is a warm supporter of France. He asked me if I despaired of her future. By no means, I replied, but I can form no definite conjecture concerning it. Her troubles are not her own alone; they are but symptomatic of the evils that exist everywhere in modern society. In some respects she has the advantage of other nations, at least in having to meet earlier than they, and attempt to solve, the difficult problems of social justice. Her experience is full of instruction for them. . . .

On Sunday General di Cesnola breakfasted with us. He was very lively and entertaining; a sweet-natured Italian gentleman, not of the finest clay, a little too much Americanized. He has the charm that is delightful in good Italians of social sympathy, a natural sense of the feelings of others, a recognition of the *equality of inferiors*. This was illustrated in the story of his diggings at Cyprus: the marvellous success

has been due not so much to any archæological skill in him, as to his instinct and tact in dealing with the Cypriote peasantry.

To G. W. Curtis

33 CLEVELAND SQUARE, W., LONDON
December 27, 1872.

I cannot let Christmas and New Year pass without sending you my love and all good wishes. It is always pleasant to send them to you, for in you the best wishes fulfil themselves. What happiness you give by being so good and happy! I have such a number of restless, irrational, unhappy, but dear friends, that there is a sense of unwonted peace in turning to you. All the people whom I care for most, on this side of the world, have some unhappy strain of fortune, or of character, or temperament, in their lives, which may, indeed, quicken the sympathy, but certainly lessens the comfort of those who love them. I find myself, even in sorrow, happier than they. Such happiness as I have had strengthens one, no doubt, for the bearing of sorrow. I do not find, as, indeed, I never fancied that I should find, that the burden lessens with the passing of time. But the days go one after another, sometimes wearily enough, but each generally bringing some gift of pleasantness in its hand. I lead a very quiet life; busy with the children's lessons and pleasures, with my own studies, seeing almost every day some friend or some picture, or book, that leaves a memory of interest. Yesterday it was Leslie Stephen, the day before Frederic Harri-

son, the day before Carlyle, another day Morley, another Ruskin, another Burne-Jones, another Morris. To-morrow Morris is coming to dine with us, to bring a story that he wants to read to us. The next day Burne-Jones and his wife are coming. He has just finished a beautiful picture called "Love among the Ruins," a picture as instinct with the true spirit of poesy in painting as was ever conceived and executed on this side of the Alps. The power of his imagination and the fertility of his fancy; his depth of feeling, and wide culture, are matched with the gifts proper to a painter. He is absolutely poet and painter by nature. Everything is picture to him. And, as I think I wrote you long ago, he is one of the most sweet and lovable of men, of tender and quick and deep feeling and of excellent sense. But the ideal or imaginative side of his nature overbalances him, and life is anything but easy and tranquil for him.

We went to Oxford the other day together, to hear one of Ruskin's lectures. It was one of the soft days of a mild English winter. The air was mild, and the landscape had that peculiar beauty which it owes to the dampness of the English climate. At every stretch of country we had the distant effects that the landscapists love, or little bits of foreground scenery like what Sally calls Bewick's "vignonettes." Ruskin welcomed us in his pleasant rooms at Corpus, where, in his study, he has surrounded himself with more treasures than ever before were gathered in one Oxford chamber. His lecture was excellent, and his talk still better. Burne-Jones had to return to town that

evening, but I stayed on for two days, dividing the time between Ruskin and the Bodleian. I am very fond of Oxford, and have been there enough to have a sense of familiarity with it. We were all there for nearly three weeks a little more than four years ago, and had then a most pleasant time....

Journal

Saturday, December 28, 1872.

A long visit in the morning from Mr. J. Cotter Morison,[1] who is now living for the most part in Paris, engaged on a biography of Comte. He is a man of more intellectual independence than originality, and of enough character to be worth knowing. He does not adopt Comte's later opinions, and seems to be fair enough in his judgment of him. We talked of religion, education, the condition of England, Positivism and Littré.

In the afternoon went to see Carlyle. Miss Bromley Davenport (whose ancestor received Rousseau and gave him a house[2] to live in in Derbyshire) was sitting with him. Carlyle was most pleasant. He told us how he remembered seeing Scott one summer's evening, driving into Edinburgh in an old-fashioned coach, in which were several young girls, he an elderly looking man, — "the picture of a quiet, composed, prosperous and victorious life, — and not three months afterwards came his failure; a very tragical memory."

[1] English Positivist, author of *Gibbon* and *Macaulay*, in "English Men of Letters" series.

[2] Wootton, near Ashbourne, in Derbyshire. Rousseau described the place in a letter to Madame de Luze, May 10, 1766.

Morris dined with us, even more than commonly pleasant and excellent in talk. He stayed as usual very late. Stillman[1] was also at dinner with us, and talked well. He left us early.

To John Ruskin

December 29, 1872.

. . . Your query in regard to the failure of religious faith, — the influence that the decline of faith had on the fortunes of Italy, — is very serviceable to me. I dare say I have put my thought too broadly, and with too little qualification in speaking of the fall of Siena. I will revise and modify what I have written; but my point of view remains this: — In childish and undeveloped stages of the life of an individual or of a community, superstitious feelings and notions are very strong; they get embodied in some sort of religious creed, and find expression in all manner of forms, ceremonies and acts of devotion. Superstition supplies most powerful and most enduring motives of action. So long as men have real faith (whether it take the form of love or religion) they can do anything. Italy was possessed very generally from the eleventh to the thirteenth century with a genuine faith, of varying earnestness and nobility. But with the increase of wealth, with the experience of conscious consecutive historic life, with gathered knowledge, with development of trade and art, — each year took away some-

[1] W. J. Stillman had married the beautiful Miss Marie Spartali in the preceding year, and was then engaged in journalistic work in London. See his *Autobiography of a Journalist* for a full account of his relations with Norton, of whom he wrote, "no kinder or wiser friend have I ever had."

thing of the superstition on which her faith had depended. Many other causes contributed to substitute the authority of the church for the influence of religion; and motives to great deeds, wrought under the impulse of faith, died away as the tide ebbs down a shore.

The "Divina Commedia" is not only the crown of the religious achievement of Italy,—but its close. It opens the way to scepticism, — and Petrarch comes sentimentally dawdling, and Boccaccio jesting, down the road, with the whole tribe of unbelievers behind them. Faith gets shut into a cloister with Fra Angelico; while Lippi and Botticelli are already happy pilgrims not to Rome, but to a New Jerusalem within whose walls lies the sacred Hill of Venus.

"I will do Sally her drawing and you yours at Brantwood," — was the sentence in your note that pleased me best.

The little box for Eliot has come safely. I keep it unopened till New Years day, — but I thank you with love on my own part as on his.

I saw Carlyle yesterday, — very well, and very beautiful his sweet, stern, rugged old face.

I hope the cold is quite gone, and that Brantwood welcomes her lord with a cheerful greeting.

Ever your loving

C. E. N.

The coming of 1873 marked the Nortons' impending return to the United States, which took place in May. Through the few intervening months the intercourse

with those whose friendship happily affected all the following years of Norton's life became more frequent and intimate. From the diary and correspondence of 1873 the ensuing passages are taken.

Journal

Thursday, January 9, 1873.

Morning spent in reading and writing. After lunch went to see Carlyle, having missed a call from him two days ago. On my way in the "underground" saw at the Gloucester Road Station the announcement of the ex-Emperor's[1] death. Simon had prepared me to expect it, in spite of the favourable bulletins that have been issued daily for the past week.

Carlyle had not heard the news. "Poor wretch!" said he, "and so he's dead. I never thought to feel so much pity for the man. Ah dear! and so the poor man has gone out of this wonderful welter and confusion in which he'd dwelt so long. Dear me, dear me! The mystery and the awe of death round him now, and not one good result from his life. A very pitiable and movin' end.

"I never talked with him but once, at a dinner at the Stanleys', where I sat next him and he tried to convert me to his notions; but such ideas as he possessed had no real fire or capacity for flame in them. His mind was a kind of extinct sulphur pit, and gave out a kind o' smell o' rotten sulphur. He was very fit for his nation, though, to be sure, they say he had n't one drop o' pure French blood in his veins. A tragi-

[1] Napoleon III.

comedian, or comic-tragedian; — and dyin' in this lamentable ignominious sort o' way. He must have wished that a cannon-ball had smashed the brains of him at Saarbrück or Sedan.

"We'll go to walk presently, when the rain holds up for a little. I remember when he came over here years ago with his Spanish wife, and they were to have a grand entry into the city. I was hurryin' home from some place where I had been at work, to get out o' the way o' the whole proceedin', and as I went up Piccadilly the crowd was standin' thick on the sidewalks, and such a collection of deformity and misery I never saw in my life. It seemed as if London had turned out all its cripples and blind men, and hump-backs, and distorted creatures to greet him, and I could n't help thinkin' it was one of the penalties o' such a man to be always attended by cripples and deformed dwarfs, and always in dread o' some secret assassin.

"What a winter it is! I don't remember the like for mildness and rain; summer days in January, but not much sunshine, not much o' the damned blue that the Thames sailor was so glad to be rid of. One must go to the Mediterranean for that. When I was at Mentone it was all sunshine and blue.. Yes, a beautiful coast, but very awful; the great mountains with bare heads and breasts rugged and wrinkled and horrible as the very Witch of Endor, and then clothed with full flowing garments o' green stretchin' down to their feet in the water. I think I was never so solitary and gloomy and so oppressed with sadness as I used to be in my walks in the woods on the brown chestnut leaves. I was

bowed under a great grief, — and grief teaches one the measureless solitude o' life, when sympathy is of no sort of avail, nor any comfort to be had except in a man's self; and not much there savin' as the conviction is borne in on him that through mystery and darkness everything is ruled by One Most Wise and Most Good, and he learns to say in his heart, Thy will be done. There's not much need of any other prayer but that, but I've sometimes thought that men of a prayin' disposition were to be envied, not because they get any answer to prayer, but because when a man 's really prayin' he judges his own conduct, and nothin' that is mean or base can escape him, and it stimulates his moral nature to honesty and activity.

"One begins to despair o' this poor old England, seein' how religion has died out of it; no livin' faith left; and there's never been a nation yet that did anythin' great in the warld that was n't deeply religious. The Deus Optimus Maximus was as real to the Romans as Jehovah to the Jews, and they had faith that he had given them dominion over the earth, and that it was their divinely appointed business to conquer the nations and give them laws."

Carlyle went upstairs to change his gray dressing-gown for his coat for walking, and when he came down, he said, "Do ye know much of Andrew Marvell? Well if you care at all for anythin' o' his I've got here a very good edition o' his works, in which I've been readin' much o' late, and I don't think I'll ever read it again, and I'd like to give it to you. His poems are worth readin', though I find not much divine in them, and

I don't value the man over highly. In fact Cromwell was the only man of that time whom one can wholly reverence, and the more I learn of him, the surer am I that he was among the greatest of the sons of men, with one o' the largest and deepest of hearts and the clearest intelligence. And there's another gift that I propose to make to you, and that is a cast taken from the dead face o' the man. It's the very likeness of him, grand and stern and melancholy and tender. I don't know any other mortal head so fine. The portrait of him by Walker isn't Cromwell; but the miniature by Cooper has got his face. I had it engraved for my book, but the subtile excellence of the portrait all oozed out in the process."

Carlyle went on to talk of Cromwell at much length and of his granddaughter, then came back to the likeness of him, — "the mask shows the man better than aught else. I never saw the mask of Dante, and what ye tell me of it interests me much. He too had a face worthy of him. I have tried to get the best likeness of him I could find, and I would like to see the mask, for it would give much o' the man's spiritual history. The portrait by Giotto shows him as

> ——— Io mi son un che, quando
> Amor mi spira, noto, ed a quel modo
> Che dêtta dentro, vo significando.

". . . Yes, as ye say, it's a notable thing that the two chief poets should have such worthy inscriptions over their graves. I suppose Shakespeare wrote the lines for himself. I often have them in mind, and I remember well, long years ago in Weimar when a very

learned German was delivering himself of verra ponderous unintelligibilities about Shakespeare, I asked him if he'd ever heard of Shakespeare's epitaph, and I repeated

> Good friend, for Jesus' sake forbear
> To dig the dust enclosed here,

and he very suddenly ceased his discoursin'."

While we were sitting by the fireside, before we left the house this afternoon, he said speaking of himself, — "I've been much misunderstood in my time, and very lately now I was readin' an article on Froude's view of Ireland in the last number of "Macmillan," written by a man whom ye may have seen, one ——, a willow pattern of a man, very shrill and voluble, but harmless, a pure herbivorous, nay, graminivorous creature, and he says with many terms of compliment that there's 'a great and venerable author' who's done infinite harm to the world by preachin' the gospel that *Might makes Right*, which is the verra precise contrary to the truth I hold and have endeavoured to set forth, which is simply that *Right makes Might*. And I well remember when, in my younger days, the force o' this truth first dawned on me, it was a sort of Theodicee to me, a clew to many facts to which I have held on from that day. But it's little matter to me. I'll not undertake now to set myself right. If the truth is in my books, and they're worth readin', it'll be found out in time, and if it's not there why then the sooner they perish the better."

Carlyle's humour of expression and tone and laugh, and the tender sensibility of his face, and his healthy

vigour of manner, give a charm to his talk which no written report of it can convey.

Monday, January 13, 1873.

Dined with Forster — Carlyle, Miss Welsh, cousin to Mrs. Carlyle, and Miss Hogarth, the only other guests. Forster much better than before his late stay at Torquay, but I fear he will never be well again; in one of his gentlest and pleasantest moods. His knowledge of and memory for the English dramatists and poets often gives a fine flavour to his talk. Carlyle talked excellently of many things, and he and Forster are such old friends that it is pleasant to see them together.

Heads of talk, — Browning's spoiling; Tennyson's decline, and the exaggeration of his admirers, his maltreatment and perversion of the old Round Table Romance; Coleridge, the surprising potential powers in him, "but no man can hope to do anythin' worth doin' and that has the temper of eternity in it without strenuous effort, and that's just what Coleridge was afraid of and hated; . . . Schiller and his family; the "Copper Captain," Louis Napoleon; the difficulty of being independent in London, etc., etc.; Child and his Ballad Circular,[1] (in which both Forster and Carlyle took cordial interest).

[1] Professor Francis J. Child, of Harvard, Norton's classmate, friend, and neighbour in Cambridge, had begun his monumental collection of *English and Scottish Popular Ballads* by sending a circular to scholars and owners of large libraries in England and Scotland, asking for information about unpublished ballads. It was happily within Norton's power to promote the circulation of his request in serviceable directions.

Friday, January 17, 1873.

After lunch went to Carlyle's and found him sitting alone in his study, smoking his long clay pipe. He gave me a pipe and we sat for an hour by the fireside and then went for a walk to the Park. He was in a most pleasant mood; — as I grow familiar with him, and a certain intimacy unites us, his character becomes more and more open and delightful, and I feel a real affection for him. . . . He is one of the most sympathetic of men.

"I've not had much sleep since I last saw ye. It's an old complaint, and I'm wonted to it. That dinner at Forster's gave the finishin' stroke; I was as prudent as man could be, but I did not get to sleep till six o' the clock the next morning. And one's troubled with all kinds o' whirlin' thoughts in the long nights; spectres and hobgoblins, that won't be laid by any exorcisms, dance a wild reel through one's head. We were talkin' about prayer the other day, — well, — I remember one night I'd been lyin' awake, tossing from one side to the other, and at last I turned over on my back, a posture I don't often take in bed, and all of a sudden the Lord's Prayer flashed before me, an' I saw it all plain written out from beginnin' to end. I don't think I'd used it officially for fifty years at least, but there it was — Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name; thy Kingdom come, — and I thought to myself that it was just the verra best compendium of everythin' that a man had need to say if he desired to make a prayer, — and as I was thinkin' I fell asleep.

"Yes (with a laugh), as you say, t'would not be a bad

notion to issue a tract entitled, 'Remedy for Sleeplessness, addressed to Sinners by Thomas Carlyle.' . . .

"And so you've never read anything o' Smollett's. Well, I commend him to you. There's a vast gift of observation in the man, and great humanity, and verra little untruth or affectation. He gives a clear picture of things as he saw them. One o' the most delightful days in my life was one summer's day when I was thirteen or fourteen years old, and I got hold o' 'Roderick Random,' and went out into the fields, and lay down on the bank of a dry ditch, on the grass, with the trees over my head, and the birds singin' in them, and spent the whole day readin' that book.

"Before I bid ye Good-night I must not forget to ask ye after my little sweetheart, Sally. Take my blessing to her."

To J. R. Lowell

LONDON, January 23, 1873.

. . . Your last letter would have given me only pleasure but for the news of Fanny's illness, and the touch of homesickness which this had brought to you. I hope that she is quite well, and that Paris has become brighter to you. Solitude is, doubtless, the maiden aunt of the Muses, but that they should find gifts in her cupboard they must first have been in society. You will find a richer store when you return to your old haunts, than if you had never left them. The trouvéres must wander over the world before they find the treasure in their own gardens or woods. How could you have found the beautiful sonnet you sent me if

you had not looked from the Cumberland hills to the far-off Charles?[1] I have a special liking for Sonnets; they are the touchstone of the true poet. . . . I have had to read of late some wingless verse, and it was a delightful refreshment to find in your sonnet poetry that soared.

But I have been reading some good poetry also. Carlyle gave me the other day a copy of a bulky new edition of Marvell's poems. The volume is heavy and cumbrous, and its editor is even unusually tedious and inane, but I was glad to make acquaintance with some pieces of Marvell's that I had never read, and to renew acquaintance with old favourites. The greater part of his work may well be left undisturbed; but now and then there are flashes of original inspiration in him, and there is much to show that he resorted to the same large fountains at which Milton drank, and which did not run dry till after Dryden's death.

The chief and increasing pleasure and interest of my days here come from intercourse with Carlyle. . . . I fancy there is more of him in "Sartor Resartus" than in his other books; at least his talk reminds me more frequently of that than of the others. Perhaps this is in part because he talks often of his early years, and falls back into trains of thought or feeling that first found their expression in "Sartor Resartus." Of his histories, it is plain that Cromwell and the Commonwealth occupy a far greater share of his interest, than the "French Revolution" or "Friedrich." He looks

[1] "The Scottish Border," beginning "As sinks the sun beyond yon alien hills." See Lowell to Norton, January 11, 1873, in *Letters of James Russell Lowell.*

back on the work he had to do for Friedrich as most wearisome labour; much of it mere digging and spading; France disgusts him; but to Cromwell he pays complete allegiance, and lives much with the thoughts of him. . . .

My time is much broken up by the small interests of the children's affairs. They are happy and busy and good, and have many pleasant little varieties in their lives. I took the four elder to see a Pantomime at Drury Lane the other day. It was their first experience of real theatre-going. They were amused, but not very much delighted. The Pantomime was too intricate for them to follow the action easily, and there was a great deal that was ugly and essentially vulgar in the show; the extravaganza was not humorous and the gaiety was, often, nothing but boisterousness and rudeness; a very bad school of taste and manners altogether. . . .

Saturday, January 25, 1873.

. . . Lord Lytton was buried this morning at the Abbey. "Rather a promiscuous assemblage"! Essentially a man of tinsel; with versatile powers, but without genius. Very dead, he and his works, as soon as he dies.

After lunch went to see Carlyle, and found Froude and Allingham with him. I have never taken to Froude, and his late performance in America is not calculated to raise one's opinion of him. His face exhibits the cynical insincerity of his disposition. Carlyle is fond of him, and assures me I should like him better, if I knew him better. But he is an out and out disciple of

Carlyle, in thought and in literary form; he, doubtless, has his good qualities which Carlyle sees, and Carlyle is not insensible to the flattery of being accepted as master by a man of Froude's capacity.

The wisest of the wise
Listen to pretty lies,
And love to hear 'em told.
Doubt not that Solomon
Listened to many a one,
Some in his youth and more when he grew old.

. . . I had but little talk with Carlyle. We started for a walk, but I had promised the children to return early, to a little party of half a dozen children, and I therefore took the "underground" and came back to a most merry assembly. . . .

Friday, January 31, 1873.

Spent a long morning at the [British] Museum with Mackay, taking a general survey of the collections. Their extent is amazing, the interest of special objects great, — but they are so ineffectively arranged, and the building is so dreary, that the aspect of everything is depressing. Beautiful objects are spoiled by ill setting. Such collections are far better arranged on the continent. It is altogether a gloomy place; — and one pities the marbles that were of old used to Italian or Greek skies. The little not only that one's-self knows, but the little that all men know, was the lesson that it all preached to me this morning. But among the fragments of Greek work, I felt . . . how love and beauty outlast knowledge, and are the expression of completed wisdom.

Monday, February 3, 1873.

In the morning at the Exhibition of the Old Masters, — looking most at Velasquez and Holbein. The Portrait of the Vice-Admiral of the Indies, Pareja, is a tremendous piece of portraiture, displaying the character of the ruffianly brood of noble Spaniards who desolated the New World with horrid cruelty, and ruined Spain with their ill-gotten gains, and their bad hearts. Never did punishment follow swifter, or with more relentless doom, upon crime. . . .

The curious puzzling object in the foreground of Holbein's picture of The Ambassadors turns out to be a human skull painted in perspective. There can be no question of it, but the question remains why he should have painted such a riddle?

Dined at Lord Russell's. Lady Russell was sweet, pleasant, well mannered (a high compliment in these days) as always, — and Lord Russell was never more genial. Age tempers his acerbities without taking from the freshness of his interests, or from his powers of mind. His memory is surprisingly strong and ready; and his talk is of interest not only from his large stock of personal reminiscence, but from his very wide culture, and his facility at apt literary allusion or anecdote. I sat next him, and, save for his deafness, there was no drawback on the pleasantness of talk with him. Through the whole of the long dinner he was animated and ready. The most marked sign of age in him was not a disagreeable one, — rather touching indeed, — the breaking of his voice when he spoke of anything that moved his feelings. And what moved him was

what had a right to move him, — some noble, or tender trait, or memory, — and each failure of voice served as a little window into a very good and honest heart.

We talked of the decline of social wit, — Sydney Smith, Madame du Deffand, etc., etc.; not one woman now with a repute for wit; scarcely a man; Lowe, to be sure, has a cynical wit, but he takes little part in society; of Thiers, of France; of Lord Brougham, of d'Alembert, etc., etc.

Thursday, February 6, 1873.

A quiet morning of reading and writing. . . .

At three went to see Carlyle; found "poor little Allingham" with him. . . . Froude soon came in; had just been reading an article of Leslie Stephen's offered him for "Fraser," on Strauss's book and the general condition of religious thought; found it too strong and outspoken for the Magazine. I urged that it was well that such men as Stephen should speak the truth plainly, . . . saying that it seemed to me the great sin of English society was insincere profession, pretending to believe that in which it had no belief whatsoever. Carlyle's sympathies were divided, — on the one hand he is wearied with talk about these things and thinks it does no good; on the other he approves moral honesty, hates paltering with the conscience, and likes manly outspokenness in the face of an hypocritical public.

In walking we fell into twos, and Carlyle walked with me; — he talked much of FitzGerald and his sad life, — a man of genial nature, son of a rich man and a

handsome woman, many children, and the family always quarreling, and living in detachments in different houses on the father's various estates. After a while Edward FitzGerald with a fortune of £800 a year went off to live alone; for many years in Tennyson's poor days he used to give him £300 out of his annual income. He became intimate with Bernard Barton [1] who lived with an only daughter, — "a clumsy lump." After Barton's death she went as housekeeper or companion into the family of one of the Gurneys. FitzGerald took a notion that she was attached to him, and he ought to marry to her. So they were married, and he brought her to London, but she was awkward and uncongenial, and he miserable. He treated her with utmost consideration, but after a year he said to her that it was intolerable and they must part, and he divided his income equally with her, and went off to solitude and became more shamefaced than ever, and lives now much alone, in a big boat in summer, in which he sails round the coast, and lives in the presence of the melancholy sea.

Was a warm friend of Thackeray, but fell off from companionship with him when he got into grand society. Lived at one time at Naseby, as solitary and gloomy a place as there is in England. Faithfully writes once a year to Carlyle; at one time they saw much of each other, but such was the modesty of the man that he never so much as mentioned the name of Omar Khayyám to him.

Carlyle had an engagement with Forster who is ill,

[1] The Quaker poet of Woodbridge, where FitzGerald lived.

and Allingham having left us, Froude and I continued our walk together for an hour through Kensington Gardens and the Park. We grew amicable as we walked, and he talked much and well of his American experiences. How much he conceals it is hard to say; but he said nothing but pleasant things to me. One of his remarks amused me, — "The only manners I met with that reminded me of the elegant old style of the Old World were those of the negro waiters."

He dreads the influence of Catholicism on our institutions; noted the change for the worse in the decline of the rural population of New England; found no hostility to England except among the Irish; fancied we should annex Cuba before long, etc., etc.

Friday, February 7, 1873.

A raw day, snow still lying in the streets, melting slowly, and making the air chilly.

Leslie Stephen made me a long visit in the afternoon. Amused with a story Froude told me yesterday in reference to his (Stephen's) article, "A Bad Five Minutes in the Alps," — the story Froude had heard in America, — of a Westerner who, having fallen down a precipice, and caught by a ledge or branch, hung, likely to fall, exclaimed, "Oh Lord! if you want to perform a miracle, now's your chance. . . ."

The break of more than a month in Norton's record of the winter was due to an illness which confined him for some time to his room.

To J. R. Lowell

33 CLEVELAND SQUARE, W., March 15, 1873.

. . . As I correct myself and write March *15* I am reminded that we mean to leave the old world two months from to-day, on the steamer for Boston. I do not want to go home without seeing you once more, and if you are not coming to England I should be greatly inclined to go to you in France for a day or two, — that is, if I can go anywhere, for I have not yet got outdoors, and if these east winds last I do not know when the excellent Dr. Quain will permit me to leave the fireside. Pray write to us of your plans for the spring, as soon as they are settled. I wish you were going home with us, — for what shall I do without you there? you who have so long been the best of home outside my own doors to me. How much longer shall you stay abroad?

You know with what a heart I return. I shall be thankful to have the mere incident over and put into the past. One thing is not much more of a trial than another, but till I have gone through this, there will be an effort yet untried to be made. I want to have gone through with this new and bitter experience.

I trust that your eyes are better, and that the pleasant spring days (if any there be) are good for Fanny and you. Paris and the neighbourhood become truly delightful in April and May, — when the horse-chestnuts come into bloom, and the wonderful thickets of lilacs perfume the air as if it were Persia. But May is beautiful everywhere. Here, the primroses are already

in flower, in sheltered woods, and there is a lovely bunch of them on my table now, brought me the other day by a pretty English girl who takes after her French grandmother, who was one of the Turennes. In the old Revolution this grandmother, who is long since dead, but who was then a pretty girl of twenty, had to fly to England. She was hidden in a cask on the deck of a vessel; the vessel before sailing was examined, and the officer asked what was in the cask. The captain made him an answer that did not please him. "We'll soon see," said he "what's in it," and ran his sword through a crack between two of the staves. The sword went through the girl's arm, and as the fellow drew it back she wiped the blood off the blade with her dress that it might not betray her. She got safe to England.

Shut up as I have been, I have seen but few people, and till lately, indeed, I have not been able to talk. Leslie Stephen and Burne-Jones have been my most constant friends, both pleasant and full of character, but very different one from the other. In the last "Fortnightly" is an interesting article by Stephen called "Are We Christians?", which I like better than you would. It is a little too cynical in tone, but very serious and thoughtful *au fond*. It is a frank statement of the scepticism prevalent here. I urge him to follow it up with a sequel to be called "What are we then?" He is just about bringing out a volume of Free-thinking Essays, in which this paper will reappear, and you will have a chance to read it if you like. Fitzjames Stephen has been writing of late a series of vigorous, hard,

unimaginative articles in the "Pall Mall" on "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," — an excellent contribution to non-sentimental political discussion. There is much sense in them, but it is of the narrow British, or legal sort. His attempt to construct a new foundation for religious belief, with which he closes his paper, is a distinct failure. He keeps his eyes open up to a certain point, and then shuts them as tight as any Bishop. Having the courage of his opinions in practical matters, he loses it in speculative concerns. These papers, also, are coming out in a volume, and will excite discussion. . . .

I have been reading old Italian books about Florence and Venice; — the most interesting of them a series of Lives of his great contemporaries by one Vespasiano, a bookseller and employer of scribes who helped Nicholas V, and Frederic of Urbino, and Cosmo de' Medici to make their libraries. It is a book full of characteristic traits and illustrations of the times; one of the most entertaining books of the Renaissance. . . .

Journal

Thursday, March 20, 1873.

Five weeks to-day since I was shut up by illness, — a slight attack of pneumonia. Not yet out.

The quiet and solitude of these weeks have not been unwelcome.

I have read much — mainly of Venice and the Italian Renaissance. I have read Smollett's Novels and Letters; and might have something to say of them if it were worth while to write down criticisms which,

dependent mainly on one's permanent judgements of literature and art and convictions in respect to life, are not likely to change or grow indistinct.

I have had visits from Burne-Jones, Leslie Stephen, Carlyle,[1] George Lewes, Burgess, etc., etc.

And I have had many pleasures.

Connie Hilliard stayed with us last week, a pretty, cheerful, sweet presence in the house. She brought me my first primroses of this year.

Wednesday, March 26, 1873.

Leslie Stephen and Morris dined with us, — they had never met before. Morris complained of feeling old. Monday was his thirty-ninth birthday; his hair, he said, was turning gray. He was as usual a surprising piece of nature; certainly one of the most unconventional and original of men. His talk was much of old Northern stories, and sagas, very vivid, picturesque and entertaining from its contents and from its character.

Stephen was pleasant, but he is best and shows his worth most in tête-à-tête.

Friday, March 28, 1873.

A beautiful spring day; warm, soft, and with a country fragrance in the London air. . . . In the afternoon went to Carlyle's; and after sitting with him half an hour, had a pleasant walk with him and Froude

[1] On March 22, Carlyle was writing to Norton: "Don't *wait* for me to-morrow; I begin to fear it may not be well possible for me to come. Give the Bonny little Bairn *sight* of her poor bit of Book, and keep it carefully for her! . . . And come yourself to see me *quam primum*."

from Chelsea through Kensington Gardens. . . . Carlyle seemed a little weary, perhaps weakened by the mild, unbracing weather; but was full of kindness and humour. He had not taken to Omar Khayyám, — "the old Mohammedan blackguard," had found his scepticism too blank and his solution of life in drink too mean. Of all Oriental poems had cared most for some translated by Rückert. . . . Carlyle's talk about Omar . . . was the Philistinism of a man of genius.

As for the miracles of the early Church and of modern times he believed in the sincerity of most of them; that is, that the men who report them reported as honestly as they knew, and had faith in the truth of their own narrations; while imagination worked its due wonders, and powers of nature seemed miraculous to those who knew nothing of them, and of their operations.

His laugh might have been heard half across the gardens when I told him Burne-Jones's story of the youth at a College examination in history, who having succeeded but poorly, and being asked by the examiners to give some account of Cromwell, replied, "He played a conspicuous part in English history, and after a brief career, was heard on his death-bed to murmur, 'Would that I had served my God as I have served my King!'" . . .

Saturday, April 12, 1873.

Last Tuesday evening Helps dined with us.[1] I have not seen him during this stay of ours in London. He

[1] [Sir] Arthur Helps. In 1849 when his *Friends in Council* was published in America, Norton had interested himself in the matter, and had been in correspondence with Helps.

has grown sadder and more worn and tired in the last four years. His nature is one to which Fate should have been kindly and gentle, and she has treated him as if he were her stepson. Life has been a disappointment to him; at many points wishes have failed of accomplishment, and hopes have deceived him. A sensitive man, he is in a position which he feels is given him as it were out of charity, and he has to accept favours as condescensions which are due to him on equal terms. He has great social gifts and culture, but on Tuesday the effort to be pleasant was plain, and the stimulus of society was not enough to make him bright. And yet for moments he flashed up into his old wonted animation, and talked not only pleasantly, with delicate perception and freshness of observation, but also with a nice though slender vein of humour. He told one or two stories after his wont. . . .

Every language [said Helps] has its own awkwardnesses; the English certainly very many. Take for instance our use of "that," — four or five "thats" perhaps in succession, as when the member in the House of Commons got up angrily and said, "I must declare that that *that*, that that honourable gentleman has just used, is extremely offensive to me."

After dinner Helps and I had a quiet talk, over the fire, in my study, with a cigar. We talked of the broken and disordered times and thoughts of men. We are, he said it was his conviction, the saddest and most to be pitied generation the world has ever known; not the less so for being in some respects the most seemingly prosperous, and the lightest minded.

The burden of daily life to a sensitive man. We have compelled the forces of nature to serve us, but their service is ruining us, — we are not strong enough to meet the demands they make on us.

Hard fortune tells ill on such a temperament as Helps. He reminds me of a fine picture ruthlessly treated by varnishers and restorers.

Ruskin's kind habit, illustrated in the following passage, of putting his friends in temporary possession of beautiful pictures and books, had its counterpart in a lifelong practice of Norton's own. Writing in 1866 to J. B. Harrison, he said: "When I was a very young man I had a book-plate engraved with my name, and the motto *Amici et amicis,*[1] 'Friends and for Friends,' and I still like to know that the books I have may turn to use for my friends as well as for myself." The instances of Norton's lending of the treasures from his shelves and walls were almost without number.

Journal

For some days past I have had in my possession, through Ruskin's kindness, the book of drawings by an early Italian master, which he has lately bought at the cost of £1000.

[1] Asa Gray, a close friend of the household at Shady Hill, writing in affectionate terms to Norton in 1848, and sending him a "duplicate copy of Ward's little volume on the cultivation of plants in closed cases," says, "Will you paste your own book-label on the inside of the cover, and give it a place among the 'Amici et Amicis' on your own shelves, to which you may add '*ab amico* Asa Gray.'"

I heard of it first from Burne-Jones, who saw it at the British Museum, and who had been greatly struck with the excellence and power of the designs. It was offered to the Museum by its late owner, an Italian, but the funds of the Museum being just now engaged for the purchase of the Castellani collection of antique bronzes and other works of ancient art, the authorities were obliged to decline to buy it. Upon this Ruskin determined to secure it.

Of its history little or nothing is known. A modern label on the cover ascribes the designs to Benozzo Gozzoli, but there can be no doubt that this is a mistake. There are 110 folio pages, all but two covered with designs; some covering two pages, some occupying one, some half a page. The subjects are taken from scripture and classical history, with no plain connecting sequence or general intention. It would seem as if it had been the design-book of an artist, in which he himself had drawn out most of the subjects, leaving some of them to be drawn from his sketches by his scholars. They are all apparently first drawn with a pencil, afterward worked over with a brownish ink, sepia perhaps, with here and there a wash of sepia. They look as if intended for engraving, or possibly for fresco painting on the walls of some palace. As a series of Italian designs of the fine period of art, by a master of rare powers of conception and equally rare powers of execution, they are, so far as I know, quite unrivalled. From their internal character one would ascribe them to the closing years of the fifteenth century, and the best of them approach so nearly in style

to the work of Mantegna that I am inclined to ascribe them to him. They are certainly the work of a very great Master. . . .

April 12, 1873.

. . . I have seen Leslie Stephen more frequently than usual during these days. He has dined with us often; his wife and their little girl and Miss Thackeray[1] being at Freshwater, while their new house in Southwell Gardens is being made ready for occupation. The keenness and sincerity of Stephen's intellect, his moral independence, his pleasant humour, his deep feeling hidden at times under a veil of playful cynicism, his ready intellectual sympathies, and his interest in the most important matters of thought, make his companionship at once agreeable and interesting. Last night he brought to read to me the first draught of an essay which is to form the conclusion of his forthcoming volume of collected essays, to appear in the autumn under the title of "Freethinking and Plainspeaking."[2] The new essay is a striking and powerful statement and assertion of the grounds and claims of Freethinking as against the current theology. I found myself in essential agreement with the whole of it. The volume will be the clearest and most definite statement yet made of the

[1] Now Lady Ritchie. Leslie Stephen's first wife was a younger daughter of Thackeray.

[2] This volume, published in 1873, bore the following dedication: —

"My Dear Norton:

"I venture to dedicate this book to you in memory of a friendly intercourse never, I trust, to be forgotten by me; and in gratitude for its fruitfulness in that best kind of instruction which is imparted unconsciously to the giver.

"Your affectionate friend,

"Leslie Stephen."

attitude of the thought of serious men who reject the old religion, and of their view of morality, duty, and life. It is not merely an attack on the old creeds, — not merely a negative answer to the question "Are we Christians?" but a deeply felt, and ably thought statement of "Why we are not so," and of the rectitude and superior manliness of our position. The satisfactory nature of the principles that are held by a freethinker of the present day as a foundation alike for the best development of individual character, and for the establishment of better social relations among men than now exist, is perhaps not presented as fully and strongly as it might be to advantage. Stephen's mind is essentially critical in its bent, and his experience has confirmed the native tendency of his mind.

The contrast between him and his brother Fitzjames is striking, and in personal relations amusing. Fitzjames is burly and broad-shouldered in mind as in body. He has one of the clearest and strongest of solid English intelligences. In practical affairs on mother earth, where things may be seen and touched, his reason has the quality of an almost brutal force and directness. It is an implement most serviceable in his generation: compelling appreciation and respect in the performance of difficult and useful work. But off the pavement his powers fail. Leslie is a far better climber of mountains than he; with a lighter step, a steadier head, stronger wind, and clearer vision.

The virtues of the practical and the speculative intellects are well illustrated in the two brothers.

Last Sunday, April 5, Grace and I lunched with the

Darwins, who are spending a few weeks in town, in a house in Montagu Street. Mr. Darwin was even more than usually pleasant; his modesty, his simplicity, his geniality of temper, the pleasant unaffected animation of his manners, are always delightful; but on Sunday there was a tenderness in his expression, and he was in better health for the day than common. His talk is not often memorable on account of brilliant or impressive sayings, — but it is always the expression of the qualities of mind and heart which combine in such rare excellence in his genius. . . .

Mr. Emerson and his daughter Ellen have returned from Egypt, and came to see us two days ago. The Nile has renewed his youth, and brought back to him a becoming growth of hair. . . . He is the pattern of the cheerful philosopher in our modern times. He has made the best of life, and is master of its fit conduct; — serene, simple, with generous sympathies, and liberal interests, with large thoughts, and kindly wisdom. It makes one happier and better to be with him. There is some hope that he may return on the steamer with us to America. I shall be very glad if he does so.

The difference between Emerson and Carlyle is very wide; life and its experience and its teachings have led them along widely diverging paths; the outcome of their creeds and philosophies is so unlike as to limit their mutual sympathies. They have fewer opinions and sentiments in common than they had forty years ago. They will be friends to the end; but neither is dependent for sympathy on the other. But how few are the deep, unbroken friendships founded on intimate

sympathy! Happy the man who has one friendship of this sort!

Saturday, April 19, 1873.

Carlyle gave me to-day the cast from the mask[1] taken from Cromwell's face after death, which he promised me some time ago, and with it an interesting statement by Woolner concerning it. It is one of seven casts taken from the original mask. He said he had long had one of the common casts such as may be found in the plaster workman's shops, that had been given to him by John Sterling. It had hung in his dressing-room for years, and his associations with it made it more valuable to him than the one that he gave me; but the cast I was to have was far the better, and much the more faithful likeness. He would like to have me see the difference, and so he took me upstairs, — the stairs of an old-fashioned house, — to his bedroom, and through this to his dressing-room; both scantily yet sufficiently furnished, far from luxurious, and, save for the look of frugality about them, with nothing special to mark them except the number of portraits, photographs, lithographs and engravings on the walls. "Here," said he, as we passed through the bedroom, "is the only room in the world where I can find quiet enough to sleep, and not always even here."

On the dressing-room walls were in one frame, a common German lithograph or engraving of Goethe

[1] This mask, with Carlyle's collection of books on Cromwell and Frederick the Great, is now in the Harvard Library. See *The Carlyle Collection*, by William C. Lane. Bibliographical Contributions: Library of Harvard University.

and Schiller; in another, Herder and Wieland; on one side was the photograph from my portrait of Emerson by Rowse, and on another the cast of Cromwell, much smoked and darkened by long exposure to the London air, and much inferior by the obliteration of the finer points of likeness to the cast taken direct from the mask; — his face, as represented in the better cast, one of the most impressive of human countenances, with an expression of grave tenderness, and of delicate sensibility such as no other likeness of it renders. It is a noble head, and the face such as one would wish Cromwell's to have been, massive in proportions, but fine in form, with features well proportioned and shaped with such lines as to indicate the depth of the soul and the sweetness of the nature of which they were the outward sign. Carlyle spoke as usual with the utmost earnestness of admiration of Cromwell. He speaks much more and oftener of him than of any of his other heroes.

As we were walking, he began in answer to some question of mine to tell me of his early literary life. He found himself when he was toward twenty years of age in a very solitary and fettered condition of mind. The only man with whom he had any sort of free communication was Edward Irving, who was then the colleague of Dr. Chalmers in Glasgow, a man of very generous nature, so that, though very much bound up by all sorts of ecclesiastical wrappings, he was still able to feel a kindly and human sympathy for such as were not similarly situated. "I used often to reduce him to sighin', and I remember well the day

when I told him that of all the things he held dear there was not one that was tolerable to me, and with what a kindness he heard me, and how sorrowfully and yet affectionately we parted. Well, if it had not been for him, I should have had no single soul to whom I could express anythin' whatsoever of the convictions that had taken possession of me, but I should have been altogether compelled to silence, and to shut up in myself what was very likely to burst me."

It was about this time, Carlyle went on to say, that he read Madame de Staël's "Germany," and found in it some indications that men were thinking in a different sort there from what they were doing elsewhere. He had read the Scotch and the English philosophers and metaphysicians without getting much light or satisfaction from them, but here he found suggestions of another philosophy, of which he wanted to learn much more than Madame de Staël was able to tell him. But he knew not a word of German, and on inquiring for a teacher, he could hear of none but a vagabond Polish Jew in Edinburgh, who professed to be familiar with the language, but of whom as an instructor he heard no good. But not long after this a college acquaintance of his, Jardine by name, who had been spending some time at Göttingen, as tutor, with a young nobleman, came back to his home some four miles away; a dull sort of fellow, but good enough in his way, and he agreed with Carlyle to give him one lesson in German a week in exchange for a lesson in French that Carlyle should give to him, and so by degrees Carlyle

got a feeble introduction to the language. But there were no books to be had, and, casting about how to get them, Carlyle bethought him that there was a flourishing trade at Leith with the east coast of the Baltic, and he asked the Provost of Leith who was a very kindly man, and had much to do with the trade, to order his correspondent to send over to him a copy of Schiller's Works. And in four or five months the book came, a big bundle of folded sheets, and Carlyle took it off to the binder's, and when he got the volumes home, he set to work to study them out with his Dictionary.

And perhaps the next year it was that he got Goethe's works in the same way, and he tried "Wilhelm Meister," and got but a little way in it, and did not discover the real contents of it, and put it aside. And after a while he took up "Faust," and it was an epoch in his life, for here he found expression given to his own dim thoughts and dumb feelings, and he found himself in strange intellectual sympathy with the book such as he had never felt with any book before, so that it was a sort of Apocalypse to him, and he recognized at length that other men were thinking and feeling as he was.

By this time the language was becoming familiar to him, and he went back to "Wilhelm Meister," and read it from beginning to end, and found it full of the most precious assistance and instruction to him. "Na, I've not in later years set the same value on 'Faust' as when I first read it. It's very far from bein' the best of Goethe's works; the philosophy of it is

verra shallow and unsatisfying. There are splendid passages, and verra deep sentences in it, but it's not a school for life. And as for the Second Part of it, I've never been able to find much interest in it; it's a confused jumble, the rakin's out of his mind. No doubt he had some purpose in it, but it gets altogether indistinct and formless.

"It was near this time that I first came to London, looking after some work by which I could earn an honest livin' and ready to do whatever came to hand. But though all my friends urged me to stay there, I told them it was quite impossible, for I could neither eat nor sleep, and I should die of the bad air and the bad food. And so I came back to Scotland with great uncertainty of prospect, and I went to see Lockhart who was in Edinburgh, much distinguished in society and among the literary people, to get some counsel from him. And he was verra kind and friendly, as I always found him afterwards whenever I had occasion to see him, — and he advised my tryin' some translatin' such as might be acceptable to the public, and he bade me beware of the publishers, which was an excellent piece o' counsel.

"And so the result of all was, that, havin' some three or four hundred pounds that I could honestly call my own, I took, with my Father's advice, a pretty farm with a verra comfortable farm house on it, some miles awa from my father's home, and one o' my brothers came to live with me to manage the farm, an' I set to work translatin' the stories that afterwards got printed as 'Specimens of German Romance,' and

that was perhaps the happiest year o' my life, for I was surrounded by all sorts of affectionate treatment, my Mother and sisters would come to stay with us there, and I took interest in translatin', and the place was beautiful, and I could look awa from my windows far southward toward the Irish Sea and the English mountains, and I had a pony on which I used to take long gallops across country, and all went well with me.

"One day after 'Wilhelm Meister' came out, I saw a review written by De Quincey, reviling the book, an' its author an' its translator, an' heapin' every species of opprobrium on them. And I said to meself, that Goethe was able to bear it, an' that, for my part, it lay in me to correct the Scotticisms that he said were found in my English, and that as for the rest I could not agree with him in one word. The truth was that he had got a slender kind o' reputation for his knowledge of German, and he took it as very presumptuous in any other man to pretend to know a word of what he held as his exclusive preserve. He was a cross-tempered, hard beset, poor little wretch of a bein'. I met him many months afterwards, and he looked pale and tremblin' as if he was afraid I was about to devour him; but we got into amiable conversation, and he appeared to agree with everything one said, till after a little you found there was no point of agreement whatsoever. I never was able to read much o' what he wrote; his "Opium Eater" was the only book o' his I could read to the end; and I read that in Edinburgh once when I had been sleepless for

many nights, and I'd begun to think of takin' some laudanum in order to get sleep, but when I finished his book, I said to myself 'better a thousand times die from want of sleep than have anythin' to do with such a drug of the devil's own.'

"He was nothin' but legs and a head, a queer spectral figure; and he led on the whole a very poor, miserable, jealous existence, and grew warse and warse, I've been told, as he grew old. An' so a daughter o' his has been stayin' with ye? And what might her name be? [1] I remember once seeing a little daughter of his, a verra sweet child, named Margaret; she might have been much about the age of my little sweetheart Sally, when I saw her; but she was the only one of his children that I ever saw. . . .

April, 1873.

As we were sitting together just after my coming in this afternoon, Carlyle spoke of Emerson. "There's a great contrast between Emerson and myself. He seems verra content with life, and takes much satisfaction in the world, especially in your country. One would suppose to hear him that ye had no troubles there, and no share in the darkness that hangs over these old lands. It's a verra strikin' and curious spectacle to behold a man so confidently cheerful as Emerson in these days.

"Well, it may be as you say. I'm not such a verra bloody-minded old villain after all," (here a cordial

[1] De Quincey's daughter Florence, Mrs. Richard Baird Smith, the widow of Norton's friend of earlier days.

laugh,) "not quite so horrid an ogre as some good people imagine. But the warld is verra black to me; and I see nothin' to be content with in this brand new, patent society of ours. There's nothing to hope for from it but confusion. I agree with ye in thinkin' that the times that are comin' will be warse than ours, and that by and by men may, through long pain and distress, learn to obey the law eternal of order, without which there can be neither justice nor real happiness in this warld or in any other. The last man in England who had real faith in it was Oliver Cromwell. . . . And I've got the mask I promised ye, all ready. There may be some in America who would like to see how that man's dead face looked; at least I know that you'll not be sorry to have it to look on sometimes; just one of the strongest and the tenderest of faces, a great expression of gentleness in it."

To J. R. Lowell

33 CLEVELAND SQUARE, W., April 20, 1873.

. . . It is our plan to stay here till Saturday, May 10; then to go to Oxford for two days, to get to Liverpool on the 15th. To our great pleasure, Emerson and his daughter are to be our fellow-passengers. His companionship will make the voyage pleasant.

He dined with us on Thursday, and seemed in excellent health and spirits. Years but make him sweeter and finer. Few men keep so steadily at their best as he. I fear he finds less satisfaction than he hoped for in seeing Carlyle. They have grown apart; content with the world is the humour of one, discon-

tent with it that of the other. Both, however, are alike in the underlying tenderness and sweetness of their souls. Emerson finds Carlyle too cynical, Carlyle finds Emerson too transcendental; daily intercourse is not delightful, but each recognizes in the other the highest gifts of nature. . . .

I have grown to feel a very strong affection for Carlyle. His kindness has been great, and he has been more than friendly to me. Indeed he has made these last six months very memorable to me. It will be one of my chief regrets in leaving the old world, that I bid him Good-bye forever. . . .

Journal.

LONDON, April 20–May 10, 1873.

These were full weeks; and yet I could do but little of what I desired, for the weather was for the most part chilly and east windy, and my chest remained so sensitive as to compel me to unwelcome prudence.

I am writing now at Ashfield.[1] It is the middle of June. To-morrow will make up a month since we left England. In depth of experience the time is not to be reckoned by days or months. Many a year of life has less of change, less of feeling in it than have been crowded into the past weeks. I go back to my last days in England as if they were a long way off; they do belong to another life from that which I am now leading, to conditions that do not exist in America. They belong to my past. I foresee that time is likely to be

[1] Norton's last weeks in England had been so full that the detailed record of his days was not completed in his journal till he reached home.

ruthless in pilfering memories that I would but cannot keep. Before I forget them I will note down some of the incidents which marked the last days of our stay in Europe.

On Monday, April 21, according to a long-standing engagement, Jane, Grace and I dined at the Forsters, with Mr. Carlyle, Miss Welsh, and Miss Hogarth. Mackay went with us. It was a pleasant dinner, for Forster was in far better condition than in the early winter, and in one of his mild and simple moods. The effect that Carlyle has on him is always beneficial, and their humours played well together. Carlyle was very sweet, a little quiet, but ready to be animated and vivacious.

The other day Froude said to me, "It's a great shame that someone should n't keep a record of Carlyle's talk. He never fails to say something memorable or admirably humorous. Why, he called somebody the other day 'an inspired red herring.'" "Pray," said I, "who is it that deserves such a label?" but Froude had forgotten.... Some days afterwards I asked Carlyle to whom he had applied the phrase, but he had forgotten, and said, he trusted he was not to be made accountable for all the extravagant phrases he had uttered in talk — there would be "verra many to rise in judgment" against him — but he would n't disown "the inspired red herring."

I told all this to Forster, abusing Froude at the same time, much to Carlyle's amusement, which was increased when Forster broke out, "By Heavens! my dear Norton, I heard that precious utterance, but I,

too, have forgotten to whom it was fitted. Mrs. Forster will remember." But when we went to the drawing-room, Mrs. Forster could not remember, and Forster called down wrath on her and himself. The next morning the post brought me a note from him at breakfast time which contained only the name,— Henry Thomas Buckle!!

The day that Emerson dined with us with Lewes there was some talk after dinner about Goethe, —and in the course of it Emerson said energetically, "I hate 'Faust.' It is a bad book." Lewes was amazed. The agreement of opinion concerning it of Carlyle and Emerson is interesting. Emerson does not like the "Dichtung und Wahrheit"; values the "Italian Journey," — and is accustomed to carry with him the "Sprüche" when he travels. Has had them this year on the Nile.

On the 5th of May Lowell arrived from Paris, to spend two or three days with us before our departure. These eight months in Europe have done him all the good which I had hoped. He is refreshed and rejuvenated; in far better health and spirits than when he was with us in Paris in October. He has begun to feel the relief from the yoke of College duties, and the hair, he says, is growing on his neck again. He always carries, however, too much of Cambridge with him; and John Holmes[1] and he have managed to make the Quais and the Rue de Rivoli mere continuations of Brattle Street. I wish he had come abroad ten years

[1] Brother of Oliver Wendell Holmes.

ago; for at fifty-four youth is too far behind one for the hope that any change in life or external circumstance will be such that it can catch up with one again. James, however, said he had begun to dream again, and he has as many projects for poems, and plans for work, as if he had never disappointed himself by making too many.

Life has not treated him well in making him shy, sensitive and inexpressive in general society; he who was made to be one of the most social of men, who is, with those whom he loves, the most agreeable and delightful of companions, seldom does himself justice with strangers, and turns to them often the unsympathetic outside of a most tender and sympathetic nature. . . .

It pleased me that he saw Carlyle, and Ruskin, and Morris for the first time, at our house. Ruskin lunched with us one day, having come to Herne Hill[1] for a short visit. He was pleasant, but not at his best, and was too much preoccupied to do justice to Lowell's excellence. Lowell was far more just to him.

Morris dined with us one evening, and was, as usual, his own surprising, simple, vigorous, homely, pleasant and interesting self. Much animated talk as usual of Iceland, more than of Italy from which he had returned the last week, after a week in Florence, — his first visit to that marvel of cities. He had seen the Academy more than once; he had been through the Uffizi, and had seen the pictures and frescoes in

[1] Ruskin's early home, at this time occupied by his cousin, Mrs. Arthur Severn, and her husband.

Santa Maria Novella, and Santa Croce; he had seen pictures enough and did not enter the Pitti.

Florence was not at its best when he was there; it was in one of its chill, cheerless, grey Northern moods. Italy to be Italy must be warm and Southern.

Another evening Georgie Burne-Jones dined with us, and the next day Lowell and I went to the Grange to see the pictures that were visible in the Studio. We saw the multitude of schemes, and half-finished works and of works near completion that make Ned's studio incomparably the richest that I have ever entered; for there is not a design among them all that is not instinct with imagination, and that does not show, as no other modern pictures show, the pure pictorial genius as distinguished by its expression in colour and in harmonious design. There were the new "Chant d'Amour"; the "Dream of Fair Women"; "Merlin and Nimuë"; the "Car of Love"; the series from the story of Pygmalion; the "Angels of the Creation"; the Sleeping Beauty series; the "Hope," and the "Charity"; "Pan and Psyche"; the "Dance by the Mill"; and many more; but we did not see the too unfinished pictorial story of Troy, — a series of pictures that seems to me quite unparallelled in truth of imagination and fullness of conception and realization since the great days of Florentine art.

Georgie was her delightful self; and James was as greatly struck and pleased and interested as I hoped he would be. . . .

May 7, Wednesday afternoon, Carlyle came in with Forster to say Good-bye to us. He asked me to send

for the children that he might see them once more. He took "his little sweetheart" Sally on his knee, kissed her with great tenderness, and gave her a little package to open when she liked. Her eyes sparkled and she ran out of the room to see what it contained. In a moment she came back, came to me with a face brimful of sweetness and pleasure, and showed me a little gold locket in which the tender-hearted childless old man had put a lock of his own hair. Seldom has a child received a more precious gift. Sally's thanks were very earnest and pretty. Little Margaret, with a strong sense of individual rights and interests, longed for a present also, and, going quite fearlessly up to the old man, began to feel in the capacious pockets of his greatcoat. Carlyle was talking at the moment, and I did not notice that he paid any special attention to her. I called her away, and she came with rather a disappointed and downcast look.

Carlyle, as he gave the little box containing the locket to Sally, "Here's a love token for ye, my poor little dear, with an old man's love and blessing. May all good be yours!"[1]

Carlyle asked me to come for one more walk with him, and I promised to do so on Friday.

I had to go to the Barings, a long way, on Friday morning, and to do other errands, and reached Leslie

[1] Carlyle's tenderness for this child continued till his death, and showed itself in various ways. In a copy of his *Cromwell* he added to the inscription, in "the usual blue pencil," of her name and his, the words, in brackets, "to be read so soon as she is ten years old." His last gift to her, his wife's silver *étui*, contains Mrs. Carlyle's work-worn gold thimble, with the words, "*Ah de mi*" engraved upon it.

Stephen's where I had promised to meet Lowell at lunch, only at two o'clock. In driving from the city I had been pained to see on the news-boards, the telegraphic message from Avignon announcing Mill's death. It was but the day before that we had first heard of his serious illness. He will be greatly missed by the best men; if his authority as a thinker has been weakened by his later essays, his moral influence has by no means diminished. No man has done more than he in England to keep the standard of thought high, and its quality pure. Every man of thought, however he may have differed from him in opinion, has had an unqualified respect for Mill. My feeling for him has in it a very tender element mingled with respect. Susan's deep regard for him, the pleasant personal relations between us in 1869, his marked kindness, the interest of his occasional letters, — all add a sense of private loss to the deeper sense of the public loss in his death.

In the first days of our stay in London, last autumn, I went out with Chauncey Wright to Blackheath, in hope of finding Mill there. It is a long time since some very interesting letters passed between them, and Wright before returning home wanted to see Mill.

It was a very beautiful English autumn day; soft, misty, with tender lights and colours. The air of Blackheath Park was damp and heavy with autumnal odours. The last time that I had walked along the pleasant way was full in my memory; and it was not discordant with my feeling to find the house deserted, the doorstep mossy and overgrown, and to learn that Mill had left it more than a year before. The lease of

the house, as I afterward heard, had run out, and Mill now spent more time than ever at Avignon.

In the winter, while I was ill, Mill was in London for a few weeks. I had no communication with him, — though perhaps I might have seen him toward the end of his stay. Lady Amberley asked me to come one Sunday to meet Mill, and Huxley, and Herbert Spencer, and Max Müller! And I might have gone, but such a congregation had no attractions for me. I would gladly have gone to see Mill alone.

Lowell was at the Stephens' before I reached there. It was the first time I had been in their pleasant new house, which is not yet in complete order, — No. 8, Southwell Gardens. I was glad to see them in it, and to have a sight of their future home. They were both very pleasant, but there was the tinge of sadness and last-ness over the hour.

Leaving them I went to Carlyle's. He received me with even more than common affection. I was hardly seated when he said, — "And how are all your little folks? That wee thing that I hear you call Gretchen, poor little dear, she thought I was very unmindful of her the other day, and came feelin' in my pocket for the gift I ought to have brought her. And so I've put up a little packet for her, that you shall take to her with my blessing." And so saying he handed me a little envelope on which was written in his usual blue pencil, "Dear little Maggie Norton's little conquest in England! To Papa's care. — T. C. 9 May, 1873." — When I opened it, after parting from Carlyle, I found

the little packet contained some American postage stamps, and four little bits of our silver or nickel money, and on the inside paper was written: "Sent to frank Chelsea Autographs; could n't act in that capacity; go now, as *spolia opima*, a better road! — T. C. (May 1873)." The packet was sealed with a seal bearing the word *Entsagen*. Prettier, tenderer, sweeter gifts were never given to little children.

As he put the little parcel into my hands, Carlyle said, "I've been thinkin' about your voyage, an' I've laid out here a few books that might amuse you. They're old books that maybe I should never open again if I kept them on my shelves. I daresay you know this one, *Scaligeriana* — it's not without its worth; not much wisdom in it, but some curious learnin' and entertainment for a scholar. And this other old volume is one of a series, I believe, of Anecdotes as they were called, of different nations, published in France some hundred years ago. This is the only one I have, — 'Anecdotes Arabes,' — but I've seen the 'Anecdotes Persanes.' I don't know, I never could find out who compiled the books, but they're done with something verra like judgment, and are not deficient, so far as I ever discovered, in accurate statement. And here's that old beggar's story that I've so often spoken of to ye, it's not the best edition, for the first edition contains much about Fielding that's of interest, but it's all omitted from the book ('The Autobiography of Bamfylde Moore Carew') as one finds it nowadays. This was the best I could find for you; it has some interest for you, for there's much about America in it, a

curious picture of things in Virginia. I've marked the passage which shows the year when he was over there. He met Whitefield and practised his art on the good man. At any rate, here it is for ye. I'll have all done up in a parcel ready for your man if he can come for them."

And as he went upstairs to put on his coat for the walk, he called Miss Welsh, and begged her to do up the books that they might be ready when Blake[1] should come for them.

Miss Welsh stayed with me while Carlyle was upstairs, very kindly, and simple, and a good friend for him. She spoke in a way that touched me of Carlyle's regret at my departure; and she told me of the great interest he had taken in the locket for Sally, and of the regret he felt when, too late, she had suggested to him that on the other side of the locket, within, to face the hair, should have been a little photographic miniature of himself. He was very sorry not to complete his gift in this way.

As we went out of the door I spoke to Carlyle of the sad news of Mill's death. He had not even heard of his illness, and he was deeply moved at hearing thus without preparation of his death. "What! John Mill dead! Dear me, Dear me! John Mill! how did he die and where? And it's so long since I've seen him, and he was the friendliest of men to me when I was in need of friends. Dear me! it's all over now. I never knew a finer, tenderer, more sensitive or modest soul among the sons of men. There never was a

[1] Norton's servant.

more generous creature than he, nor a more modest. He and I were great friends, and when I was beginnin' to work on my 'French Revolution' there was no man from whom I got such help. He had lived a long while as a youth in France, and he'd made an excellent collection of books and he'd observed much, and the Revolution had been a great interest to him, and I learned much from talk with him, and nothing would satisfy him but that I should have all his books that could be of any sort of use to me. And he was always forward with the most generous encouragement, and as the book went on he began to think there never had been such a book written in the warld, — a verra foolish piece o' friendliness, — and when the first volume was finished nothing would serve him but that he should have it, and needs must take it to that woman, Mrs. Taylor, in whom he'd discovered so much that no one else could find. And so she had it at her house on the riverside at Kingston, and I never shall forget the dismay on John Mill's face one day when he came to tell me that the housemaid had lighted the fire with it, and it was gone. There's no denyin' it was a terrible blow! But he behaved in an entirely generous and noble manner about it. But the year's hard work was gone, — and it was a calamity quite irreparable. Oh, as for her, I never heard that it very much diminished her content in life.

"A verra noble soul was John Mill, quite sure, beautiful to think of. I never could find out what more than ordinary there was in the woman he cared so much for; but there was absolute sincerity in his devotion to her.

She was the daughter of a flourishing London Unitarian tradesman, and her husband was the son of another, and the two families made the match. Taylor was a verra respectable man, but his wife found him dull; she had dark, black, hard eyes, and an inquisitive nature, and was ponderin' on many questions that worried her, and could get no answers to them, and that Unitarian clergyman that you've heard of, William Fox[1] by name, told her at last that there was a young philosopher of very remarkable quality, whom he thought just the man to deal with her case. And so Mill with great difficulty was brought to see her, and that man, who, up to that time, had never so much as looked at a female creature, not even a cow, in the face, found himself opposite those great dark eyes, that were flashing unutterable things while he was discoursin' the utterable concernin' all sorts o' high topics."

Carlyle went on to tell me that their intimacy grew, Mill devoting himself to Mrs. Taylor, spending all his evenings and every Sunday with her, till officious friends suggested to Mr. Taylor that he was letting matters go too far; that he, good man, then interfered, and the result was that, a longer or shorter time afterward, Mr. and Mrs. Taylor determined to have separate establishments, and that she took a small house at Kingston-on-Thames, where Mill was in the habit of going on Saturdays to spend the next day, and whither Carlyle had sometimes been in his

[1] William Johnson Fox, for whom South Place Chapel, in London, was built.

company. Carlyle was convinced that their relations were entirely innocent; that the only blame which could be visited upon them was that, being deeply attached to each other, they had been perhaps too indifferent to Mr. Taylor's feelings and interests, but of this inner part of their experience he (Carlyle) knew nothing. (And this conviction I have found to be universal among those who have known Mill most intimately; and it would be wholly in disaccord with Mill's principles, character and temperament, to suppose that the relations between him and Mrs. Taylor had ever been other than pure and innocent. It agrees with this that I heard, I forget from whom, in the course of the past winter, that Mill had refused to become acquainted with Mrs. Lewes, had spoken in terms of the strongest reprobation of her course, and had expressed himself very warmly as to the wrong committed by her in its effect on society, and its influence on women exposed to temptation to violate the conventional relations between man and woman.)

"At one time," continued Carlyle, "the poor woman became very feeble, and fancied she was goin' to die, and she sent for me, and I went with Mill, and she wanted me to become trustee of such property as she had, for the benefit of her children. It was all verra pathetic, but I had to tell her that she could n't have made a warse choice, that there was no man less fit to take charge of other people's property, for I could scarcely mind my own, and that if by chance I ever happened to have a hundred pounds o' my own I was altogether at a loss to know what to do with it. And

I begged her to ask some one else, and to let me off, though I wad gladly have sarved her if I could.

"Well, John Mill and I were very near friends for many years, and I know not what parted us, but I remember the last time we ever met. It was when your countrywoman, Margaret Fuller, was here. She brought me a letter from Emerson, to which I wanted to do honour, and I determined to ask some o' the people she would like to see to meet her at dinner, and John Mill among them. And I went one day to the India House to invite him, and before I got there I met him coming along the street, and he received me like the very incarnation o' the East Wind, and refused my invitation peremptorily. And from that day to this I've never set my eyes upon him, and no word has passed between us. Dear me! And many a night have I laid awake thinkin' what it might be that had come between us, and never could I think o' the least thing, for I'd never said a word nor harboured a thought about that man but of affection and kindliness. And many's the time I've thought o' writin' to him and sayin' 'John Mill, what is it that parts you and me?' But that's all over now. Never could I think o' the least thing, unless maybe it was this. One year the brother o' that man Cavaignac who was ruler for a time in France,[1] — Godefroi Cavaignac, a man o' more capacity than his brother, — was over here from Paris, an' he told me o' meeting Mill and Mrs. Taylor somewhere in France not long before, eatin' grapes together off o' one bunch, like two love-birds. And his descrip-

[1] Louis Eugène Cavaignac, dictator in 1848.

tion amused me, and I repeated it, without thinkin' any harm, to a man who was not always to be trusted, ——, a man who made trouble with his tongue, and I've thought that he might perhaps have told it to Mill, and that Mill might have fancied that I was making a jest o' what was most sacred to him; but I don't know if that was it, but it was the only thing I could ever think of that could ha' hurt him.

"And after a time when Taylor died, he married the widow, and then he gave up all society, and refused all invitations, for he knew that hard things had been said about his wife and about himself, and he would see no one who was not ready to do her absolute honour. And they were always said to be very happy together, till she died, and now he's gone after her whom he loved."

All this talk went on as we walked up through the Chelsea Streets, by Onslow Square, to Queen's Gate. As we were going up Queen's Gate the rain began to fall and during one shower we sought shelter under a porch. The shower passed and we started to walk again, but before we had reached the Park the rain began again, more heavily than ever, and put a stop to further walking. We hailed a hansom, and Carlyle said I might take him to Forster's, close by. We parted in the cab.

"I'm sorry to have ye go. The relations between us this winter have been very humane," [1] were among his last words to me. He was very grave, very tender,

[1] Though "humane" is clearly the word written in Norton's journal, he subsequently quoted Carlyle's saying, in a letter to Mrs. Alexander Carlyle, using the word "human."

and my last sight of him was as he waved farewell to me with his hand from Forster's door.

Carlyle wrote in his notebook, June 8, 1873: "Emerson, and Norton with family, sailed for Boston from Liverpool, 15th of last month. Kind parting from both, from Norton almost a pathetic, not to meet again."[1]

The plan of spending a few days in Oxford on the way to Liverpool was carried out. Jowett, Palgrave, Swinburne, Max Müller, Acland, Dr. John Simon, and Ruskin himself — best of all — appear in the record kept by Norton of these brief and full days.

"We reached the familiar Randolph," the journal says; and continues [May 11th], "I took Sally and Eliot to walk in the afternoon down the Long Walk and by Christ Church meadows, where their Mother liked to walk; and we looked into Christ Church itself, where the stones were full of memories; and where Ned's window added a new interest to the place. As the sun grew low I took the children to the Gardens of Johns, and there they heard the nightingales and the blackbirds and we spent what Sally called 'a lovely time.'

"On Tuesday, May 13, I breakfasted with Ruskin. Acland came in after breakfast full of zeal in the defence of the Dean of Christ Church, and the new work and restorations of the Church itself.

"Ruskin and I parted at the gate of Corpus, — the last friend to whom I bid farewell in England. . . .

[1] This entry in Carlyle's notebook immediately follows the sentence quoted at the beginning of this chapter.

"At two we left Oxford for Liverpool, — the last sight of the England of one's fancy and one's heart."

Journal

Thursday, May 15, 1873.

Embarked for home. Steamer "Olympus," Capt. McDowell. About fifty cabin passengers, and over eight hundred steerage passengers; too many for safety, no sufficient provision for life in case of accident. The ship's boats, supposing all well launched, and filled to their utmost capacity, would not have held one half of the souls on board. Counting all on board (crew, stewards, etc.) there were more than one thousand of us. All Atlantic voyages have perils enough; but the "Olympus" was a staunch boat, and our captain a thorough seaman, and an excellent man, with a sense of the responsibility of his position.

A little note from Connie, brought to me on board the tug that was to take us to the Steamer, a letter from Lowell given me by the Ship's Agent as we were steaming down the river, were the last farewells from England.

The thought of our voyage up the Mersey, almost five years ago, filled my memory.

On the tug were our fellow-passengers, — Emerson and his daughter among them. He had arranged in London to return with us. . . . We were off without delay; the afternoon closed greyly upon us. At night we were well down the channel, and the lengthening wake measured the material distance between me and the best part of my life.

The care of the children occupied or broke up the occupation of the days at sea. They were good sailors, and behaved well. The days were for the most part grey and chilly; the sea not at its best or its worst. For a day or two it was, to use a phrase of Sally's, "very hard." We had no adventures, no alarms. I had little talk with anyone but Emerson. Sometimes in the daytime we would smoke our cigars together; always in the evening, after the children were in bed, and my Mother and Grace arranged for the night, and Jane taking care of them, or gone to her cabin, Emerson and I had two hours together till at eleven the lights were extinguished in the saloon. Then, till midnight, I had my solitary walk on deck, and then to bed.

Emerson was the greatest talker in the ship's company. He talked with all men, and yet was fresh and zealous for talk at night. His serene sweetness, the pure whiteness of his soul, the reflection of his soul in his face, were never more apparent to me; but never before in intercourse with him had I been so impressed with the limits of his mind. His optimistic philosophy has hardened into a creed, with the usual effects of a creed in closing the avenues of truth. He can accept nothing as fact that tells against his dogma. His optimism becomes a bigotry, and, though of a nobler type than the common American conceit of the preëminent excellence of American things as they are, has hardly less of the quality of fatalism. To him this is the best of all possible worlds, and the best of all possible times. He refuses to believe in disorder or evil. Order is the absolute law; disorder is but a phenomenon; good is

absolute, evil but good in the making. He intensifies his old saying: —

> "Yet spake yon purple mountain,
> Yet said yon ancient wood,
> That night or day, that Love or Crime
> Leads all souls to the Good." [1]

He is the most innocent, the most inexperienced of men who have lived in and reflected on the world; he is also the most cheerful and the most hopeful. His temperament is happily mixed; he has had entire health. "I have never known," he said to me, "what it was to be ill for a whole day." [2] He has lived with wise moderation; has lived with high thoughts, with noble aims, with generous confidence in the universe and in man. He has not allowed himself to doubt the supremacy of the best in the moral order. He is never weary of declaring the superiority of assertion and faith over negation.

He was born nearly with the century, and his soul received its bent from the innocent America of before 1830. He breathed in the confident, sweet, morning spirit of a time when America believed that the 4th of July, the Declaration of Independence, the common school, and the four years Presidential term, were finalities in political science and social happiness; of a time when society was simple, and comparatively innocent; when our institutions and our progress were the wonder of de Tocqueville and the Old World, and the delight of ourselves; when there were Peace Societies,

[1] See Emerson's poem, "The Park."

[2] Yet it was his delicate health which took him to the South in 1826 and to Europe in 1832.

and it seemed to the youth uninstructed by the past as if the Millennium were really not so very far off. His philosophy was of necessity one of hope; the gospel of prosperity; and it was settled so far as its influence on thought, action, and character were concerned, before General Jackson was chosen President and we had entered on the new and less child-like epoch of our modern democracy.

Whatever limitations his creed may have put to his intelligence, it has served as the foundation of a large and beautiful morality. And his main influence will always be that of a moral philosopher. In those who know him, his person and character enforce his teaching. He would find no difficulty in entering any kingdom of Heaven; his sympathies would be perfect with its denizens. If by mistake he were to visit Hell he would deny its existence, or find it what he believes it, still the abode of good and the realm of order.

"There's a surprisin' contrast between Emerson and me," said Carlyle.

"It is rank blasphemy," said Emerson one day on our voyage, "to doubt the good order of the universe; everything makes to good. The moral element in man is always uppermost, is supreme, is progressive. Man is always better than himself. This world is happy, and for happiness; it is meant for the happy. It is all the time improving. I don't believe one word of the earth's shrinking up, finally to disappear. It is insanity to suppose it. This dwelling place of man is eternal as man himself.

"The universe is not a cheat; the order of the

external world, the beauty of it, are the proofs that the internal, the spiritual is in accord with the hopes and instincts of man and nature for their perfection.

"Order, goodness, God are the one everlasting, self-existent fact.

"I measure a man's intellectual sanity by his faith in immortality.

"Of course a wise man's wish for life is in proportion to his wisdom. There can be nothing so good as existence. It is only disease that can ever make a man desire death. Pain, sorrow are of no account compared with the joy of life. If a man be overcome by them he violates the moral order. It is not credible that a sane man should not wish for life. If you tell me that sorrow has deprived life of its worth and joy to you, that you do not care for more of it, — I must count you diseased, and must send you to the doctor or the mad-house."

I found it in vain to suggest instances of misery, of crime, in society, of apparent ruthlessness and disorder in nature, to his view. He would not entertain them. His faith was superior to any exceptions.

But such inveterate and persistent optimism, though it may show only its pleasant side in such a character as Emerson's, is dangerous doctrine for a people. It degenerates into fatalistic indifference to moral considerations, and to personal responsibilities; it is at the root of much of the irrational sentimentalism in our American politics, of much of our national disregard of honour in our public men, of much of our unwillingness to accept hard truths, and of much of the common tendency to disregard the distinctions between

right and wrong, and to excuse guilt on the plea of good intentions or good nature.

During the ten days of our voyage our talk naturally ran over a wide field. Emerson likes personal talk, so far at least as one's accounts of persons illustrate or are illustrated by traits of character, national or individual. He had much to tell me of his own acquaintance in England, and was never weary of questioning me concerning men and women.

He had seen Ruskin in Oxford, had been charmed by his manner in the lecture room, but in talk with him at his rooms had found himself wholly out of sympathy with Ruskin's views of life and the world. . . . "I wonder," said he, "such a genius can be possessed by so black a devil." "I cannot pardon him for a despondency so deep. It is detestable in a man of such powers, in a poet, a seer such as he has been." "Children are right with their everlasting hope; Timon is always inevitably wrong."

Emerson seemed to deny a place to the Jeremiahs. They are all no better than madmen, unless they correct their gloom with the bright prospect of the coming Messiah.

With Carlyle's gloom and dark hopelessness he has more patience, partly, perhaps, from early familiarity with it, when his own optimism was less dogmatic, partly from a keen perception of the healthy humour that redeems Carlyle's despondency from despair. But it has pained him; and though they had come together again with friendliest affection, yet he complained that they had had no good talks together. He was inter-

ested in what I could tell him of Carlyle, and promised to show me his record of talks with Carlyle in old days.

We talked much of poets, — living and dead. He ranks Tennyson very high, higher than I am ready to think right, and I was surprised to find him inclined to regard Byron as the chief poet of the century, and to give him place before Wordsworth, among the immortals. Shelley he had hardly read; had never cared for him. Admitted the vigour of some of our recent Western poets, Bret Harte especially, and read me with great emphasis one or two of Bret Harte's copies of verses cut out of some newspaper. They had spirit, pathos, picturesqueness; — but wanted to my sense the stamp of art, — the fine touch, the perfect form, the complete finish. They had a little of the character of work made to order; of inspiration with a stopcock. . . .

I lent him Omar Khayyám, and he forgot that he had condemned him six months before. I told him what Carlyle thought of the poor old poet; but he became deeply interested in the little volume, and kept it through the voyage to read and re-read it. Found it good as the best Persian poetry; very lofty in its defiance; with rare depths of feeling and imagination.

What did I know of FitzGerald? Much talk followed of Saadi and Hafiz; of a Kurd epic; of the "Kalewala," of which Emerson had just now for the first time heard, while in Paris, from Lowell. He had met the French translator of the epic at the table d'hôte of the Hôtel de Lorraine, — the hotel where Lowell has been all winter. It was surprising that so wide a reader as Emerson should only now have learned of so striking

a monument of early epic and legendary poetry. But he is likely to know it henceforth better than most of us; for his curiosity is not easily satisfied, and he is thorough in his sampling of books.

Emerson told me much of his early life; his father died when he was a mere boy; of his mother he said little, but he had much to say of his Aunt Mary,[1] "the guardian genius of the house," a woman of marked character, of strong intelligence, of wit, of humour and of feeling. Her letters to his brothers and himself were so full of sense and spirit, that he had copied all he could find of them. Her rebuke and her praise were equally just, equally stimulating. No other person had exercised so strong or so salutary an influence on him. He was sent to the Latin School, and did well enough there, early gaining some credit and some flattery for certain school compositions in verse.

One day he told me the story of his leaving the Ministry. He had come to the conviction that he could not administer the Lord's Supper as a divinely appointed, sacred ordinance of religion. And, after much debate with himself, he told his people that he could henceforth conduct the service only as a memorial service, without attributing to it any deeper significance. A parish meeting was held; the parish, though most kindly affected to him, could not bring themselves to accept his view, — it would be tantamount to admitting that they were no longer Christians. He resigned his charge, but an effort was made to induce him to remain, he administering the Lord's Supper in his

[1] Mary Moody Emerson.

sense, the people receiving it in theirs. But he saw that such an arrangement was impossible, and held to his resignation.

He suffered much, his health broke down, he was in such a state that his friends grew anxious concerning him; he was advised to try a sea-voyage, and in 1832 he sailed for Europe. The captain of the vessel on which he embarked told him afterwards that he looked and seemed so ill when he came on board, that he thought he would not live to cross the ocean. In 1833 he returned home well, to live some quiet years in Concord.

He was hardly prepared for the amount of feeling produced by his "Divinity School Address" (1838); the thoughts in it were natural to him, and he was intimate with men who sympathized in the main with him, — such as Bartol, Hedge, William Channing, and Ripley. He was accustomed to meet them at a club where they freely interchanged opinion.

"The Dial," — Margaret Fuller, — Lowell too hard on her in the "Fable for Critics," and yet he did not much exaggerate; only he should have seen and stated the other side of the woman. With all her credulity and vanity, she was not empty, and she had a great capacity of inspiring younger people of promise. Sam Ward, for example, had listened much to her, and to good purpose. What a loss to us, to Boston, his departure has been! But New York did not gain what we lost; there is no society there for such men.

Emerson's simplicity, modesty, manliness were conspicuous in all his talk. There is not a touch of vanity or conceit in him; all sweet and pure and generous. He

possesses, indeed, the defects of his qualities; he does not reason, his judgment is often mastered by a sentiment, or is the result of one; he is over-generous often in his views of men and their works; the very sweetness of his being, at times, obscures his moral, or at least his intellectual perceptions.

He blushed like a youth one day when I spoke to him of his influence on the men of my generation; and of its being one of the chief factors of the intellectual condition of America at the present time. He would not hearken to such a suggestion, would not admit the idea of his influence, he had done nothing to give direction to the intellectual tendencies of the nation, he had only been in sympathy with what had proved to be the prevailing national currents of thought and feeling, though at first it might have seemed as if they were partial and local. He had been very fortunate in his times.

He returned over and over again to the topic of the happiness of life, and the joy of living. Sunday, the 25th of May, the day before our voyage ended, was his seventieth birthday. After breakfast I said to him some of the pleasant things that were natural. He replied with a semi-humorous, — "You are only too good, with all these kind words, but the day is a melancholy anniversary for me. I reckon my seventieth birthday as the close of youth." But his youthfulness will end only with life.

> Blest of the highest gods are they who die
> Ere youth is fled. For them, their Mother Fate,
> Clasping from happy earth to happier sky,
> Frees life, and joy and love from dread of date.

> But thee, revered of men, the gods have blest
> With fruitful years. And yet for thee, in sooth,
> They have reserved of all their gifts the best, —
> And thou, though full of days, shalt die in youth.[1]

As I have indicated at least in what I have already written of him, Emerson's youthful capacity of enjoyment, the youthful ardour of his faith in the goodness of things, the youthful freshness of his sympathies, the youthful zest of his curiosities, — keep him among the young. His fidelity to his early ideals gives him perennial youth. He is

> "True to the voice at eve obeyed at prime."

Age shows in him in no apparent weakening of faculties, unless in occasional failure of memory. . . . He is still a poet, but he will write no more poetry. The fount of inspiration no longer pours over its banks, but wells up to their margin, without overflow. As one learns to know him familiarly, day after day, one learns how natural to him, how true to his own character is his own poetry. The poet and the man are one.

I might end here this desultory record of our talks on board, but a few more bits of them come back to me, which are perhaps worth noting.

One day, a day of rough waves and dark skies, we were wondering at the boldness of the early sailors, and,

"How in Heaven's name did Columbus get over!"

"Not so much of a wonder after all," said Emerson, "he had his compass and that was enough for such a soul as his." The miracle of the magnet, the witness of the Divine spirit in nature; type of the eternal control of matter by spirit of fidelity to the unseen and the

[1] These verses by Norton, written to celebrate Emerson's seventieth birthday, were given to him on the day.

ideal. "I always carry," he added, "a little compass in my pocket. I like to hold the visible god in my hand."

Speaking of the men of letters and professors whom he had lately seen in London and Oxford, he complained that they were too anxious to appear like mere men of the world, that you could get no serious talk with them, that they were mere after-dinner talkers. Even Jowett had nothing to say of Plato, and Max Müller would give you nothing from the East. Ruskin, to be sure, was serious enough, but his perversity made you angry, you could not talk with a man who insisted on being hopeless to the extreme of denial of the progress of the world. He should come to America to be restored to sanity.

"Of the fine air of learning, of the old fashionable grace of the student, little was left at Oxford.

"What a pert piece of cleverness and conceit is Tyndall. There was never a phrase more wearisome than his perpetual 'Quite so! quite so! quite so!'"

Emerson spoke, as he has done in past years to me, with strong feeling of my Father's kindness to him when he came to him desirous to enter the Divinity School, but uncertain whether, owing to weakness of eyes, he would be able to do all that was required of the students. He spoke of the admiration and respect with which all his pupils regarded my Father; of the strong impression his earnestness, his thoroughness, his sincerity made on them; of the weight and wit of his words. His sayings were treasured. "We all waited on his lips."[1]

[1] This of course was long before Emerson's "Divinity School Address" (1838) and Andrews Norton's characterization of it. See *ante* p. 13.

This led us to a long talk concerning the changes in the intellectual conditions in America during the past generation, — and their effects upon character.

I go back from Emerson's talk on board about Wordsworth to what he says of him in "English Traits." He gave in talk only the first of the following sentences; it needed to be completed by the remainder.

"There are torpid places in his mind, there is something hard and sterile in his poetry, want of grace and variety, want of due catholicity and cosmopolitan scope; he had conformities to English politics and traditions; he had egotistic puerilities in the choice and treatment of his subjects; but let us say of him, that, alone in his time he treated the human mind well, and with an absolute trust. His adherence to his poetic creed rested on real inspirations. The 'Ode on Immortality' is the highwater mark which the intellect has reached in this age."

Monday, May 26, 1873.

Landed at East Boston after sunset. Drove with the children to Cambridge. All was familiar, —

Alas! for the sameness
That makes the change but more.[1]
ἡ χώρα αὐτὴ τὸ μὴ ὂν ποθήσει.

[1] Lowell: *The Dead House.*

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